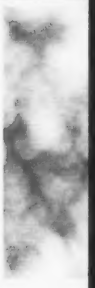
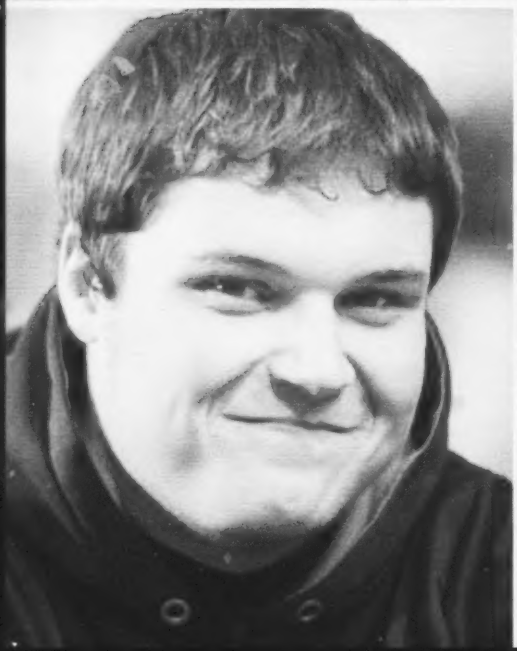
Child & Youth Advocate (Alberta)

Annual Report 2012-2013





Photography in the 2012-2013 Annual Report provided by Jimmy Jeong of *Jimmy Shoots Photography*, Edmonton, AB

say

specialized advocacy
for **youngPeople**

The Honourable Gene Zwozdesky
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
325 Legislature Building
10800 97 Avenue NW
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Mr. Speaker:

It is my privilege to submit to you the 2012-2013 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate.

The Report has been prepared in accordance with Section 21(1) of the Child and Youth Advocate Act and covers the activities of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate for the period April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013.

Respectfully,

[Original signed by Del Graff]

Del Graff

Child and Youth Advocate

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

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Message from the Advocate

When the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* was proclaimed on April 1, 2012, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate became an independent Office of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. This provided a new mandate for our work with vulnerable young people in Alberta.

Our first year in this new role has been a busy one. We have worked hard to build our capacity so that we can fulfill our legislative mandate. We recruited staff, built systems and processes for our financial and business planning, and engaged other Legislative Offices in discussions about shared services for information technology.

At the same time, we have continued to provide advocacy services to vulnerable young people through individual advocacy, child legal representation, and systemic advocacy. We have also worked to forge new relationships. During the past year we made more than 170 presentations to Government of Alberta and community stakeholders about our new enabling legislation and mandate.

Throughout the past year, a vital and valuable part of this work has been the contributions made by individuals and groups throughout Alberta who work with vulnerable young people every day. The efforts of these passionate and committed people make a huge difference in the lives of the children and youth, and we are all better for it.

Most important, however, has been the involvement and participation of young people in our work - through public education, focus groups, individual dialogue, and a new Youth Advisory Panel. I am always amazed at the strength, resilience and wisdom that young people share when they have an invitation to participate, a forum in which to be heard, and someone interested in hearing what they have to say. Directly hearing the voices of young people helps us better understand them and better understand how to effectively respond to their needs.

In the last year, we set a course through our business plan to strengthen our individual advocacy services, increase our efforts for effective systemic advocacy, enhance quality legal representation for children

> I am always amazed at the strength, resilience and wisdom that young people share when they have an invitation to participate, a forum in which to be heard, and someone interested in hearing what they have to say. Directly hearing the voices of young people helps us better understand them and better understand how to effectively respond to their needs.
>
> Del Graff,
> Child & Youth Advocate

and youth, and increase public education and stakeholder engagement. I am very pleased to report that we have made progress in each of these areas. In addition to this, we developed a process for completing investigative reviews of death or serious injuries of young people receiving designated services. We also developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Human Services for how we will work together to affect positive outcomes for children.

Our office made a request this year to the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices to support two amendments to our legislation. One amendment was to expand the age range of our mandate with regard to investigations and enable us to review the serious injury or death of a young person who was between 18 and 22 years old and receiving Ministry services at the time of the event. A second amendment was to enable advocates to be involved with Appeal Panels under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* and the *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act*. The Committee supported our request and these amendments are proceeding.

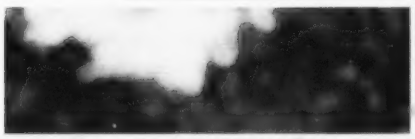
While we have made significant progress, there is still much to do. With new staff has come a need for a new permanent office space. We must continue our work to redefine our relationships with stakeholders in light of our new role, and establish new relationships with stakeholders who are now part of our mandate. We also need to continue to learn about our role as an Office of the Legislature, and the responsibilities, processes and expectations that come with that new role.

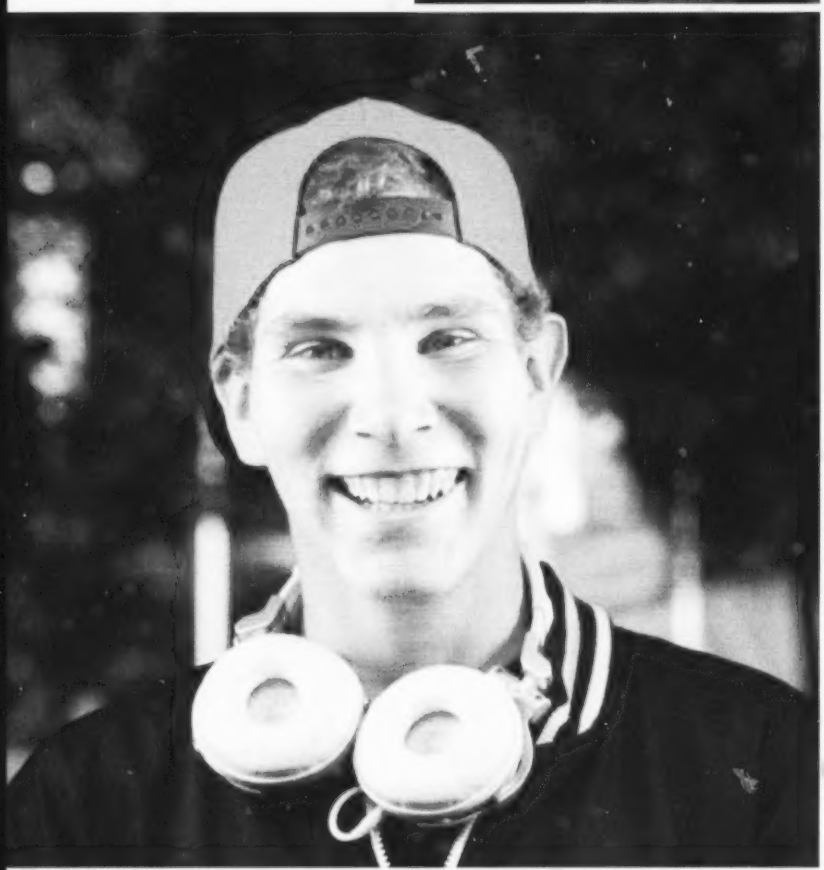
We also have some challenges. For example, while we have a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Human Services that identifies how we will work together, our access to information is less timely than we hoped. While we are working on this, progress has been slow. In addition, we have made a number of significant recommendations through our reports that would improve services and outcomes for children and youth involved with the child intervention system. However, the response to these recommendations has been limited. We will continue to work with the Ministry of Human Services, with whom we have good relationships, to advocate for action on the recommendations we have made.

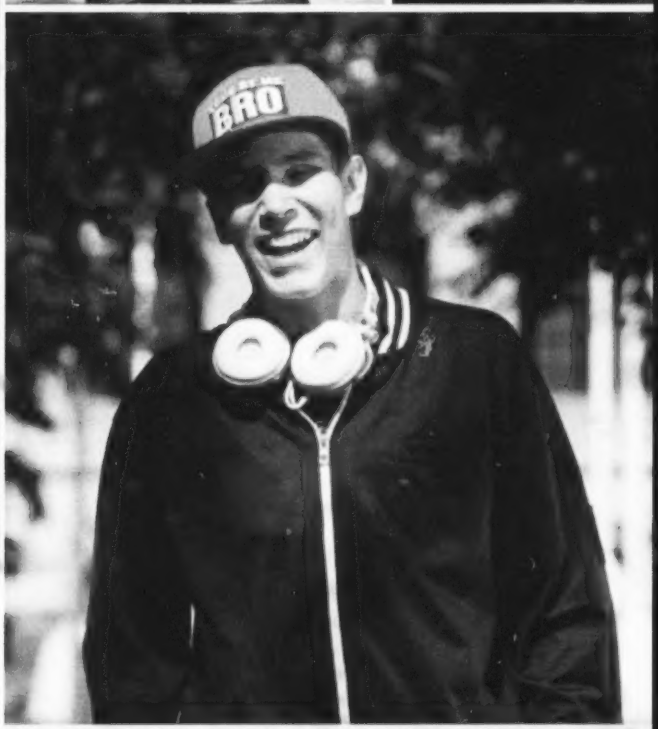
This Annual Report provides a summary of our activities over the past year. It illustrates how we have worked to position ourselves to serve vulnerable young people in Alberta under a new legislative mandate. It also discusses the actions we have taken to best represent the rights, interests, and viewpoints of young people with conviction, passion, care, and respect.

Advocacy is not a neutral activity. All staff of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate are driven by a shared concern for young people, and a commitment to doing all we can to improve the services they receive, often through very difficult circumstances in their lives. It is these young people, who have the courage to let us know what they need, that make all of our efforts worthwhile.

BRO



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Office of the Child & Youth Advocate

About the Office

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA) provides individual and systemic advocacy for children and youth receiving "designated services" as defined under the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*. This includes young people receiving or attempting to access services under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* (the *"Enhancement Act"*) and the *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act* (*PSECA*), as well as youth involved with the youth criminal justice system.

The OCYA also provides legal representation to children and youth receiving intervention services, provides public education, and conducts investigations into systemic issues in the event of the serious injury or death of a young person receiving designated services.

Our Vision

The rights, interests and viewpoints of Alberta's vulnerable children and youth are affirmed and acted upon.

Our Mission

We represent the rights, interests and viewpoints of Alberta children and youth who receive designated intervention services or who are involved with the youth criminal justice system.

> "My Advocate has provided me with such amazing support in regards to my on-going issues with Child & Family Services. My Advocate has always supported me and articulated what I needed assistance with even when I could not articulate those things myself. It has been a godsend to have someone in my corner."
>
> Tyler M, age 20

> "The advocate helped me to express myself in the best way I wanted to come across."
>
> Orlanda C, age 21

Charting New Territory

Advocacy on behalf of children and youth became an integral and distinct component of Alberta's Ministry of Children's Services in September of 1989 with the launch of the Children's Advocate. In 2004, the name of the organization was changed to the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

Child and youth advocacy in Alberta underwent yet another evolution when in 2012 a new *Child and Youth Advocate Act* (the "*Act*") was proclaimed. Under the *Act*, the OCYA became an independent office. Effective April 1, 2012, the Child and Youth Advocate (the "Advocate") began reporting as an independent officer to the Alberta Legislature. Thus began a new era in child and youth advocacy in the province.

In its new, independent role the OCYA provides an important "check and balance" on behalf of young people when government intervention has been necessary to ensure their safety, security and development, and when the Government of Alberta has significant decision-making responsibility and authority on their behalf.

> "Self-advocacy is something we coach on a daily basis, however our system can be complex. It is always a good thing to have someone who is able to assist in navigating those things which may create great barriers if not resolved."
>
> **Charlotte MacDonald-Allan, Program Manager Calgary Young Offender Centre**

The work of the office is focused on ensuring young people who come to its attention understand their rights and have every reasonable opportunity to participate in the decision-making that affects them. The primary recipients of feedback from the OCYA are the Alberta Legislature, the Ministry of Human Services (the "Ministry") and Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General. This feedback is provided informally on a continuous basis and is formally conveyed through service reports and an annual report.

In many ways, the OCYA's first year of independence has been like venturing into uncharted waters. When the *Act* was proclaimed, it had been many years since a new legislative office had been established in Alberta. The OCYA therefore did not have the benefit of drawing upon the recent experience of others, and there were no established policies in place to inform our new independent role. A considerable focus over the past year has been establishing the necessary policies, procedures and practices to ensure the OCYA is effective and accountable in its new role.

Since becoming an independent office, the OCYA has noted a greater degree of caution from Alberta government ministries when interacting with the office. Consequently, this past year has involved work to reshape our relationships with Alberta government ministries, stakeholders, and maintaining relationships with the youth we serve.

The Organization

The work of the OCYA is centered around four divisions:

1. Advocacy Services;
2. Legal Representation and Quality Assurance;
3. Strategic Support; and
4. Systemic Advocacy and Outreach.

All of these divisions report to the Child and Youth Advocate, who is an Officer of the Alberta Legislature.

About this Report

Under the *Act*, the OCYA is required to submit an Annual Report to the Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly.

The *2012-2013 Annual Report* outlines the major activities undertaken in each division of the OCYA. It provides statistical information regarding the services provided by the OCYA and outlines the organization's priorities for the year ahead.

Advocacy Services

Advocacy Services is responsible for representing the rights, interests, and viewpoints of young people who are receiving services under the *Enhancement Act*, the *PSECA*, and youth involved with the youth criminal justice system.

The OCYA delivers advocacy services with the philosophy that each child and youth is capable of expressing a view. This philosophy is supported by the OCYA's experiences with young people and by research. Children and youth each express views differently, but they are nevertheless expressed. An infant, for instance, may express comfort when being nurtured by a caregiver, whereas a youth may express how they feel through verbal communication.

The OCYA also affirms that all young people have rights and interests that must be considered when decisions are being made about and with them. The rights for young people are outlined in *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and in Alberta legislation.

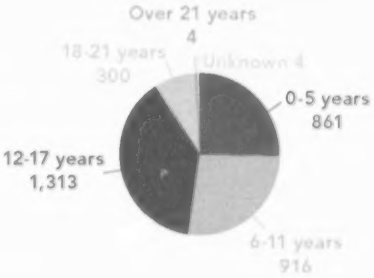
Advocacy Services receives referrals concerning young people who may have issues related to their planning, care and services in the child intervention and youth criminal justice systems. When an advocate receives such a referral, the advocate commences an information gathering process. This begins by gaining an understanding about the young person and his or her circumstances in order to identify whether the presenting issue(s) or other issues exist for the young person.

In most circumstances, the advocate is able to identify the young person's views by communicating directly with the young person. An advocate discusses and explains rights and interests with the young person in a manner that the young person can understand. If the young person confirms or identifies the presenting issue(s) or other issues then, with the assistance of the advocate, the young person develops an advocacy plan to resolve those issue(s). Advocacy activity is led and consented to by the young person, and guided by the young person's views and the interests and rights they want to pursue.

In some instances, young people are capable of expressing their views about potential issue(s), but are not able to fully understand certain concepts, such as their related rights and interests (e.g., details about proposed plans, services and/or placements). They also may not be certain about what the advocate could or should do to assist them.

> "Advocacy made it possible for me to get a better education and made it so I cannot worry about what comes next in the future."
>
> Ryan S, age 17

Ages of Young People Served (Total 3,398)



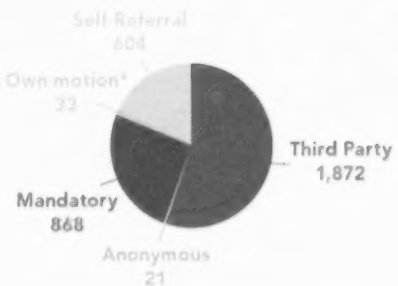
In these situations, the advocate will gather further information from a number of sources to determine if there is an issue affecting the young person and if there are any factors impacting their ability to provide instruction. The advocate will also spend time with the young person to determine how much involvement the young person is capable of having in developing their advocacy plan and in undertaking advocacy activities. The advocate will then develop an advocacy plan to resolve any identified issue(s), guided by the young person's views, related interests and rights.

In other instances, an advocate is unable to ascertain a young person's views on the presenting issue(s) due to the young person's age or limiting condition. In these situations, the advocate will gather information from a number of sources, including the young person. If this information indicates the presenting issue(s) or other issues exist then the advocate will develop an advocacy plan to resolve those issues based on the information gathered, including the young person's related interests and rights.

Advocacy work with or on behalf of young people often involves conversations and meetings with the young person and individuals who are focused on resolving the young person's issues (e.g., the young person's caseworker, probation officer, caregiver, or service provider). Advocacy work can include file reviews, reviews of related policies and legislation, elevating discussions to supervisory or management levels, and other dispute resolution processes.

Advocacy Services provided services to a total of **3,398** young people.

Referral Sources of Young People Served (Total 3,398)



* Own motion referrals are those initiated by the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

Key Activities in 2012-2013

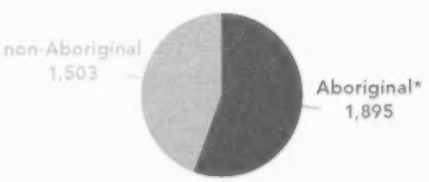
Providing services in a climate of increased need.

During 2012-2013, Advocacy Services provided services to a total of 3,398 young people. This represents a 13 per cent increase in the number of young people served compared to last year. Most of this increase came in the form of services provided to children who were 11 years old or younger. The number of children served who were less than 6 years old and between 6-11 years old increased by 26 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively. The highest number of children served by Advocacy Services continues to be those between 12 and 17 years of age.

Referrals of the young people who were served by Advocacy Services during 2012-2013 came from sources similar to the previous year. Notably, referrals from third parties increased by 32 per cent compared to last year.

The majority of young people served by Advocacy Services continue to be Aboriginal children and youth. Aboriginal young people now comprise 56 per cent of all children served, compared to 58 per cent in the previous year.

Racial Origin of Young People Served (Total 3,398)



* Aboriginal includes young people identified as First Nations, Inuit, Metis, "Non-Status", "potential to be registered", and "unknown Aboriginal group".

Working to standards to best serve young people.

To help ensure advocacy services are delivered effectively and to safeguard the young people served, the OCYA has established Advocacy Service Standards. There are ten standards for advocates in such areas as: a requirement to have face-to-face contact with young people, gathering information, responsiveness in developing an advocacy plan, and involvement of young people in planning. The service standards represent what is minimally expected by an advocate in providing services to a young person.

Advocacy files are reviewed for every young person whose services concluded in the previous year to ensure they comply with the Advocacy Service Standards. This past year marked the fourth consecutive year that advocacy files have been reviewed. Independent reviewers were retained to complete the monitoring, and the results will be made publicly available on the OCYA website. The focus in advocacy services is to strive towards best practices. Results indicate that standards were met for most files.

Engaging key stakeholders and building advocacy relationships.

During the past fiscal year, advocates from the OCYA met with over 50 stakeholder groups to build relationships and share knowledge about each organization's mandates and programs. Many of these meetings were with stakeholders involved in providing youth criminal justice services. These included: youth probation and community correction teams in Calgary, Edmonton and area, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat; and all of the probation offices in the North, except for Cold Lake. Further meetings took place with staff at the Edmonton and Calgary Young Offender Centres, as well as staff at the Youth Criminal Defence Offices in Calgary and Edmonton.

Advocates also met with stakeholders to raise awareness about changes in the OCYA, including its new role as an independent office. This included meetings with staff from Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSAs)[1] and from many Delegated First Nations Agencies (DFNAs).[2] Meetings also took place with staff at Catholic Social Services and Chimo Youth Retreat Centre in Edmonton, McMan Youth and Family Services in Whitecourt, and Sifton Family and Youth Services in Lethbridge. In addition, advocates also provided training to foster parents for the Edmonton and Area CFSA and Tribal Chiefs Child and Family Services, East.

Artwork by Michelle K, age 17

Strengthening individual advocacy services.

The OCYA *2012-15 Business Plan* identifies the following goals for Advocacy Services:

- provide advocacy services within Alberta's youth criminal justice system and train new advocates to support the anticipated increased caseload; and
- identify the best practices and outcomes for advocacy services both in the areas of child intervention and the youth criminal justice systems.

To fulfill the OCYA's expanded mandate to provide advocacy services within Alberta's youth criminal justice system, three advocate positions were added, along with Manager of Advocacy Services positions for the OCYA's north and south offices. Altogether, nine new advocates were hired to meet the advocacy needs of young people. The new advocates underwent training that included a comprehensive six-module training program, as well as mentoring by and shadowing with experienced advocates. New advocates were delegated by the Child and Youth Advocate once they met the established delegation criteria.

> "Advocacy has helped give witness to what was going on for me and my sister. I felt that when people weren't listening having an advocate helped us to say what we needed to show our opinion of what was going on to the people making the decision which helped us turn things around."

Norman S, age 16

1 These included the CFSAs in the Southwest, Southeast, Central, East Central, North Central Alberta, Calgary and Area, Edmonton and Area, and Métis Settlements.

2 These included Kasohkowew Child Wellness Society, Tsuu T'ina Child and Family Services, Siksika Family Services Corporation, and Piikani Child and Family Services.

> As a therapist, I am passionate about advocating for young people because hearing their pain, frustration, and feelings of powerlessness in session compels me to take action on their behalf outside of session. I advocate to ease their burden, to model healthy assertiveness, and to communicate to them that they are worthy of standing up for. I also believe it is my responsibility to use whatever power is inherent in my position to influence other professionals to do their best work for youth.

Tara Passmore,
The Family Centre

Enhancing advocacy policy and practice.

To further strengthen the OCYA's advocacy services, considerable focus was placed this past year on reviewing individual advocacy practices and establishing new best practices. This work was informed by a series of practice discussions with advocates, a review of best practices in other jurisdictions, and conversations with young people. The result of this review was an extensive revision of the *Advocacy Services Policy and Procedures Manual*. This revised manual guides the OCYA's individual advocacy practice, is consistent with the new *Child and Youth Advocate Act* and best practice principles. The manual also incorporates the previously noted OCYA Advocacy Service Standards.

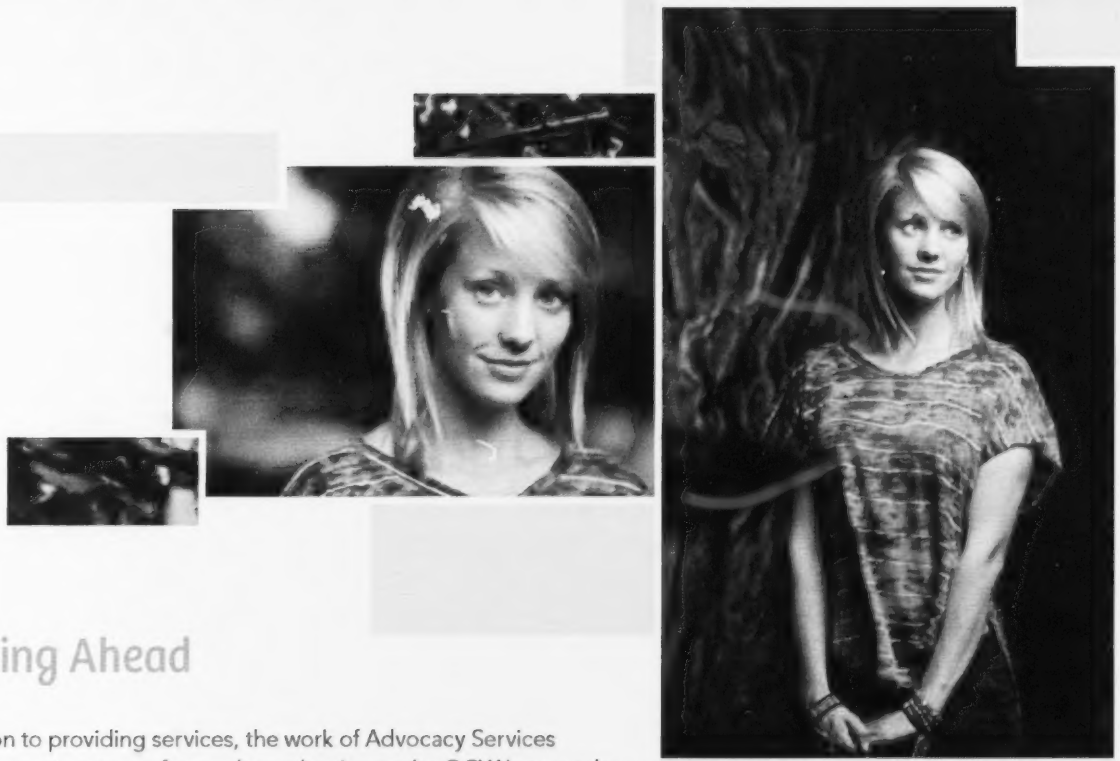
The revised *Advocacy Services Policy and Procedures Manual*:

- Guides advocates to be consistent in their responses to new referrals from or about young people, including young people for whom the OCYA has received a *Mandatory Notification* from the Ministry;
- Clearly explains the responsibilities of advocates when they are representing the rights, interests and viewpoints of young people;
- Confirms that advocates must assume each child is capable of directing the advocacy effort, except when certain factors are present; and
- Clearly identifies factors that would prevent a child from directing the advocacy effort and identifies the need to acknowledge the evolving capacities of every young person. Acknowledging the young person's evolving capacities ensures the young person can be involved as much as possible in advocacy efforts, and supports increasing the young person's involvement whenever this opportunity arises.

Reporting to stakeholders.

In the past, the OCYA prepared quarterly reports for each CFSA and DFNA and a provincial roll-up report, and made these publicly available on the OCYA website. During the past year, this reporting process has been redeveloped based on input from a range of stakeholders about how the OCYA could improve its reporting processes.

Under the new process, "Service Reports" are prepared twice a year covering the periods ending March 31 and September 30 of each year. The purpose of the Service Reports is to provide a summary of the OCYA's advocacy activities to each service delivery jurisdiction during the six-month period. The Service Reports will serve as a key communications tool with CFSAs, DFNAs and the Ministry. Once a completed Service Report has been discussed with these stakeholders, the report will be posted on the OCYA website.



Looking Ahead

In addition to providing services, the work of Advocacy Services during the past year was focused on adapting to the OCYA's new role and expanded mandate. With much of that work complete, the focus will shift to further strengthening the OCYA's capacity to assist young people in their advocacy.

In the upcoming year, Advocacy Services will:

- Work towards expanding its presence in centers within the youth criminal justice system to facilitate meetings with young people and staff.
- Refine advocacy practice through an examination of the practices of colleagues in other provinces at a national conference in September.
- Undertake a series of information and training sessions for staff.
- Draw on the OCYA's Youth Advisory Panel for input into advocacy practice.
- Implement a comprehensive public awareness plan, which is expected to increase the number of referrals of young people.
- Undertake discussions with the Ministry to make certain processes such as information sharing and mandatory notifications more efficient and effective.

Legal Representation & Quality Assurance

> Since 2006 I have provided legal representation for children and youth referred to me through the Legal Representation for Children and Youth service, Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.
>
> Whether appointed to act for infants, toddlers, or adolescents it is critical that I establish a child/youth's presence and voice in all aspects of the child welfare/ protection legal arena. When these children/youth feel heard, validated and respected the majority are incredibly open and trusting in sharing their lives, especially given their often difficult life circumstances.

JoAnn Quinn,
LRCY Lawyer

Legal Representation

Established in 2006, Legal Representation for Children and Youth (LRCY) is a service that provides for the appointment of independent legal representation for children and youth under the age of 18 who are receiving services under the *Enhancement Act* or *PSECA*, with the exception of adoptions.

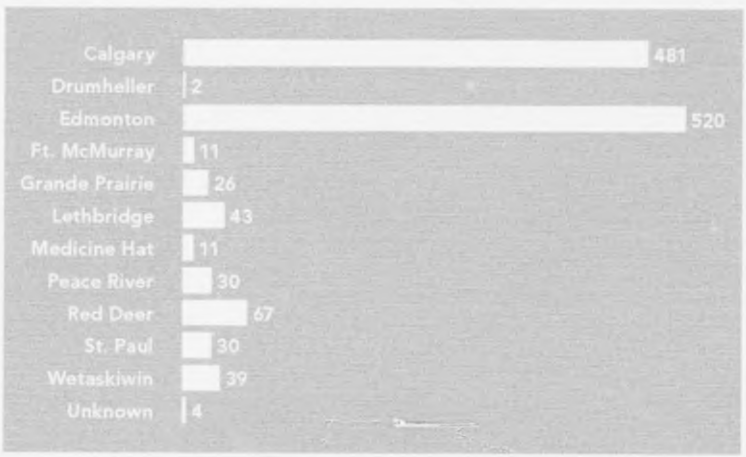
LRCY makes use of a roster of lawyers who are drawn upon to provide legal services. There are approximately 90 lawyers on the LRCY roster, who are located throughout the province.

Key Activities in 2012-2013

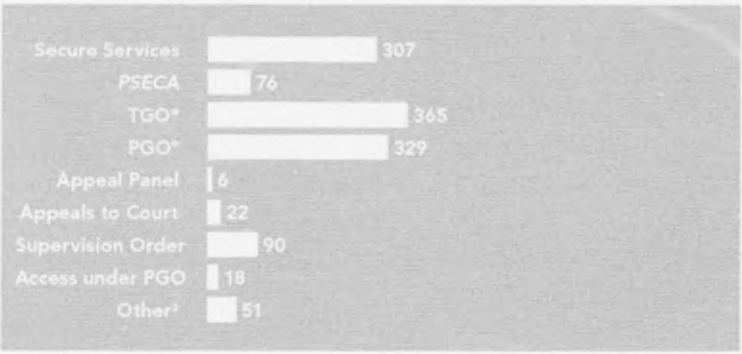
Addressing increased needs for legal representation.

During 2012-2013, a total of 2,101 young people were appointed legal counsel, 94 more children than in the previous fiscal year. A total of 1,264 legal appointments were made, an increase of 48 legal appointments, which represents a 3.9 per cent increase in appointments compared to 2011-2012.

Appointments by Court Location 2012-13 (includes surrounding areas)



Appointments by Court Matter 2012-13



* "TGO" refers to Temporary Guardianship Order

† "PGO" refers to Permanent Guardianship Order

‡ "Other" includes: (1) guardianship applications under the *Family Law Act* for children with permanent guardianship status; and (2) applications regarding a youth's child (when the youth has *Enhancement Act* status).

Ensuring young people benefit from quality legal services.

LRCY makes use of a Quality Assurance Framework that identifies the following outcomes for the legal services that it provides to child and youth clients:

- Consistent;
- Child/youth friendly;
- Easily accessible from anywhere in the province;
- Timely; and
- Quality legal representation.

Service standards for roster lawyers and program standards for LRCY staff have been established to support the achievement of these outcomes. The standards are monitored for compliance and the results are shared with lawyers and staff on a regular basis, enabling them to incorporate feedback into their practices.

Each year the results are tabulated and a Monitoring Report is published on the OCYA website. At the time of writing, the quality assurance reviews for the last quarter of 2012-2013 were not yet complete and therefore, overall compliance rates have not yet been determined. It is expected the Monitoring Report will be published on the OCYA website in the fall of 2013.

A total of **1,264** legal appointments were made for **2,101** young people.

Facilitating easier communication with roster lawyers.

In November 2012, LRCY implemented a new Legal Appointments and Payment system. The new system provides greater functionality and enhanced data management processes, helping facilitate smoother and more efficient communication with roster lawyers. One new feature is that roster lawyers can submit their invoices electronically, which will help reduce the amount of resources devoted to administration. A number of training sessions were provided in Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge and Innisfail to assist lawyers in making the transition to electronic invoicing.

"What have I learned in the last year? I have been humbled by an 8 year old child who has brought to my attention something that I forget when I am faced with the voluminous disclosure by the Director and that is "the child's knowledge about their family." My client TOLD me in no uncertain terms that I did not know her parents, and neither did the caseworker or the Court. She knew her parents. She knew their strengths, weaknesses and manipulations..."

Kathleen Linton,
LRCY Lawyer

Engaging youth clients to inform continuous improvement.

As a means of encouraging continuous improvement in the quality of legal services provided to young people, LRCY regularly obtains feedback from youth (i.e., clients who are 12 years of age and older) regarding the services they received from roster lawyers. This engagement takes place through a telephone survey after the youth's legal matter is complete. The survey results are shared with roster lawyers in a non-identifying manner. Roster lawyers have indicated they appreciate receiving this feedback.

Over the past year, LRCY engaged 81 youth about their experiences with 46 roster lawyers. The feedback was mainly positive, with 97 per cent of the youth reporting they were happy with the legal services they received. Many said they liked their lawyer. Some youth indicated they would have liked more contact with their lawyer and some felt that it was difficult to contact their lawyer.

Sample Feedback from Youth LRCY Clients

"I think it was fine how he represented me but I wish that he would have booked the time to come and meet with me."

"It was good. He told the court what I wanted."

"I was pretty pleased with the way things went."

"I really liked her and she was a good lawyer."

"Try and meet with kids a little more, try to be at court more."

Enhancing legal representation.

A key area identified in the OCYA *2012-15 Business Plan* was to, "Enhance quality legal representation for children and youth". A number of initiatives were undertaken in 2012-2013 to further this objective.

Professional development continues to be an important approach. For lawyers to maintain their membership on the LRCY roster, they are required to complete three hours of related and approved training per calendar year. During the past year, LRCY offered the following training sessions for roster lawyers:

- Interest Based Instructional Advocacy & Advanced Interviewing (Calgary and Edmonton)
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (Calgary and Edmonton)
- Office of the Child and Youth Advocate – What does it mean to be an independent office of the Legislature? (Calgary and Edmonton)
- AVIRT – Alberta Vulnerable Infant Response Team (Calgary only)

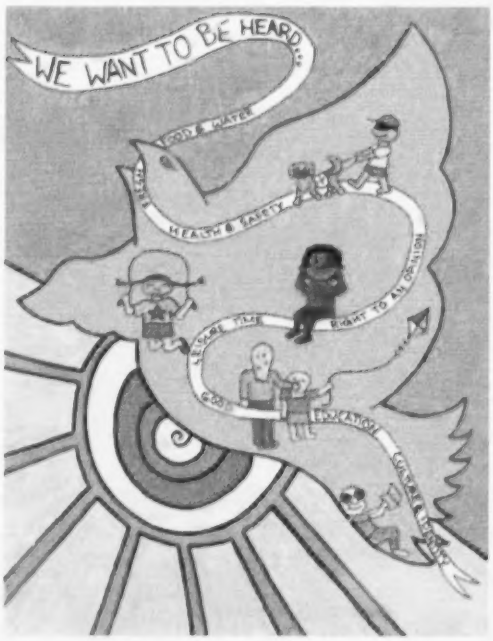
A brown bag lunch series was also offered in Calgary and Edmonton for the fourth year. Facilitated by roster lawyers in Edmonton, and Calgary, the series provided roster lawyers opportunities to network and discuss current relevant case law.

The LRCY biennial conference provides an additional opportunity to build knowledge and enhance the quality of legal representation provided by roster lawyers by:

- heightening awareness of the rights of children and youth;
- examining current information in child intervention and child development;
- showcasing best practice in child legal representation; and
- providing a forum to share practice experience.

The first biennial conference, held in 2011, offered thought-provoking sessions focused on child legal representation and how to represent the most vulnerable population in the best possible way. During the past year, LRCY undertook planning for its second biennial conference, which will be held in Jasper, Alberta on October 27 – 29, 2013 and will focus on the rights of the child. Keynote speakers are expected to include Dr. Cindy Blackstock[3] and Dr. Bruce Perry.[4]

During the past year, LRCY also began a review of roster eligibility criteria and policies. This review will incorporate best practices research and consultations with stakeholders, including young people. The review is expected to be complete by August 31, 2013.



Artwork by Madeleine B, age 14

Looking Ahead

The upcoming year will be a busy one for LRCY, with major activities expected to include:

- Receiving and implementing recommendations arising from the LRCY roster eligibility review.
- Hosting the LRCY biennial conference.
- Educating stakeholders on the legal services that LRCY provides for children and youth, with a goal of raising understanding and acceptance about the right of children and youth to have their voices heard in legal matters that involve them.

3 Dr. Cindy Blackstock is the Executive Director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada www.fncaringsociety.com and Associate Professor at the University of Alberta.

4 Dr. Bruce Perry is the Senior Fellow of The ChildTrauma Academy, a not-for-profit organization based in Houston, TX (www.ChildTrauma.org), and adjunct Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University in Chicago. He serves as the inaugural Senior Fellow of the Berry Street Childhood Institute, an Australian based centre of excellence focusing on the translation of theory into practice to improve the lives of children.

Artwork by April C, age 12

Quality Assurance

Under the new *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, the Advocate assumed the responsibility to "investigate systemic issues arising from a serious injury to or the death of a child who was receiving a designated service at the time of the injury or death, if, in the opinion of the Advocate, the investigation is warranted or in the public interest."[5]

A "designated service" includes any service under the *Enhancement Act*, with the exception of adoptions and services provided to youth over the age of 17 years.[6] It also includes any service provided to a young person who is in open or closed custody through the youth criminal justice system at the time of the serious injury or death.

The OCYA fulfills this mandate by undertaking Investigative Reviews when necessary. An Investigative Review does not assign legal responsibilities, nor does it replace or determine the need for other processes that may occur, such as investigations or prosecutions under the Criminal Code of Canada. The intent of an Investigative Review is not to find fault with specific individuals, but to identify and advocate for system improvements that will help enhance the overall safety and well-being of children who are receiving designated services. Fundamentally, an Investigative Review is about learning lessons, rather than assigning blame.

Key Activities in 2012-2013

Establishing policies and procedures to guide investigations.

With this new responsibility, the OCYA needed to establish policies and procedures to guide how Investigative Reviews are undertaken. During 2012-2013, the following process was established:

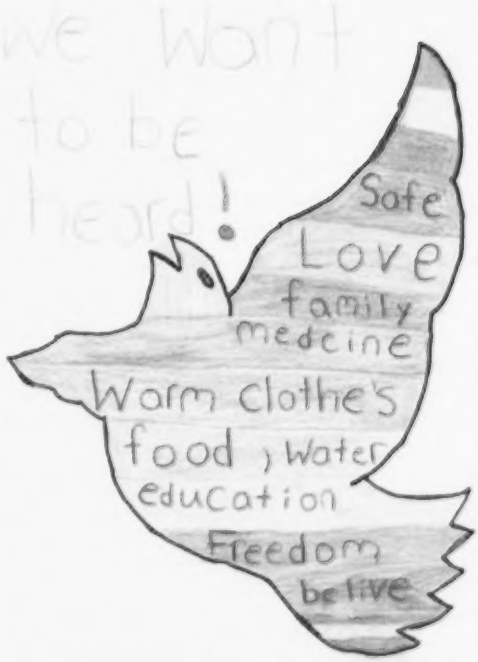
- When a report of the serious injury or death of a young person is received by the OCYA, a Screening Phase is commenced. In this phase, the matter is reviewed to determine if there are potential lessons to be learned from the matter, and/or if it would be in the public interest to investigate the matter.
- If it is determined that a review is required, the OCYA notifies the involved Ministry of Human Services or Alberta Justice and Solicitor General that the matter will proceed to an Initial Assessment. This phase consists of a detailed review of the file information regarding the matter.

5 *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, S.A. 2011, C-11.5, s.9 (2)(d). Serious injury is a life threatening injury to the child or an injury that may cause significant impairment to the child's health.

6 A legislative amendment has been passed and is awaiting proclamation that enables the Advocate to investigate serious injury or death of a young person age 18 to 22, who is receiving services under a Support and Financial Assistance Agreement.

- The Initial Assessment is completed by an OCYA Investigator who makes a recommendation about whether a full Investigative Review into the matter is required. This recommendation is based on whether lessons could be learned about potential systemic issues, and/or whether a review is in the public interest.
- Informed by this recommendation, the Advocate reviews information about the matter and determines whether to proceed to a full Investigative Review.
- If a decision is made to proceed to a full Investigative Review, then Terms of Reference are developed for the review. These identify the scope of the review and guide review activities. The Terms of Reference are shared with the Council for Quality Assurance for their input and/or comment.
- The CFSA(s) or DFNA(s) connected with the matter are advised that a full Investigative Review will be conducted. The OCYA provides the CFSA(s) and DFNA(s) with a list of their staff to be interviewed as part of the review.
- The Investigative Review is conducted in two-person teams. Typically, it involves interviews with relevant individuals connected with the matter, the gathering of additional information, and research and analysis. Family members of the deceased or injured young person may be notified and involved in the review.
- For each review, a unique Investigative Review Committee is established, comprised of members having experience with the systemic issues identified in the review. The committee meets to review the report, and identifies findings and recommendations.
- To ensure administrative fairness, a chronology of the circumstances of the matter is shared with applicable Alberta government ministries to confirm the accuracy of the fact pattern prior to the completion of the Investigative Review.
- A final Investigative Review report is publicly released. The report summarizes key findings regarding the designated services that were provided to the young person, and makes recommendations that may help prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future. To protect the privacy of the young person involved and family members, the final report is non-identifying.

This process will help ensure that Investigative Reviews are undertaken consistently and fairly. It is important the Investigative Review process maintains integrity and credibility in order to provide an effective check and balance on systems that are providing designated services to children and youth.



Artwork by Rebecca K, age 9

Reports of Death of a Young Person

Level of OCYA Review	Care Situation at Time of Death	Circumstances of Death
Screening Phase*	In care	Pre-Existing medical condition Under 5 years
Screening Phase*	In care	Motor Vehicle accident Between 12–15 years of age
Screening Phase*	In care	Pre-existing medical condition Between 15–18 years of age
Screening Phase*	Not in care	Undetermined; possibly related to SIDS Under 2 years of age
Screening Phase*	Not in care	Undetermined; possibly related to SIDS Under 2 years of age
Screening Phase*	Not in care	Motor vehicle accident Under 2 years of age
Screening Phase*	Not in care	Pre-existing medical condition Under 2 years of age
Screening Phase*	Not in care	Pre-existing medical condition Under 2 years of age
On hold pending regional review	Not in care	Suicide Between 12–15 years of age
Initial Assessment¥; will proceed to full review	In care	Suicide Between 12–17 years of age
Initial Assessment¥; will proceed to full review	In care	Suicide Between 12–17 years of age
Initial Assessment¥; will proceed to full review	In care	Suicide Between 12–17 years of age
Initial Assessment¥; will proceed to full review	In care	Drowning Between 5–11 years of age
Initial Assessment^	In care	Medical complications due to neglect Under 5 years of age
Initial Assessment^	Not in care	Undetermined; possibly related to SIDS Under 2 years of age
Initial Assessment^	In care	Undetermined; possibly related to SIDS Under 2 years of age
Initial Assessment; out of scope	Not in care	Alcohol poisoning Over 18 years of age
TOTAL		**17 young people**

* Based on the information received during the Screening Phase, it was determined that a full Investigative Review would not proceed.

¥ Based on the results from the Screening Phase, an Initial Assessment was conducted. From the Initial Assessment it was determined that a full Investigative Review would proceed.

^ Based on the results of the Screening Phase, an Initial Assessment was conducted. From the Initial Assessment, it was determined that a full Investigative Review would not proceed.

"I believe young people deserve our unconditional support, including acceptance and defense of their individuality, perspective, and dignity. Recognizing the most vulnerable people as human beings elevates them above their circumstance and empowers them to find their voice, creating feelings of worth and sparking growth. This type of support fosters trust and helps to build relationships with wary and hurting young people, enabling us to provide thoughtful and meaningful care."

Brandy Thompson,
PSECA Worker, Region 6

Undertaking our new investigative role.

During 2012-2013, the Advocate received 20 reports of the serious injury or death of a young person. All 20 reports were received from the Ministry.[7]

The OCYA has already learned lessons in the first year of undertaking this new role, and is working to enhance its ability to fulfill its investigative role. One report received this past year concerned a young person who was over 18 years of age at the time of her death, yet still receiving services under the *Enhancement Act*. Under current legislation this matter fell outside the Advocate's jurisdiction to review. As a result, the Advocate requested an amendment to legislation giving the Advocate authority to conduct Investigative Reviews for young people between 18 and 22 years of age and receiving designated services when they are seriously injured or die. This amendment was passed by the Alberta Legislature and will come into effect upon proclamation.

Reports of Serious Injury of a Young Person

Level of OCYA Review	Care Situation at Time of Injury	Circumstances of Injury
Screening Phase*	In care	Head injury due to assault Between 15-18 years of age
Screening Phase*	In care	Head injury due to pre-existing condition Under 5 years of age
Screening Phase*	Not in care	Accidental overdose of prescription medication Under 5 years of age
TOTAL		**3 young people**

* Based on the information received during the Screening Phase, it was determined that a full Investigative Review would not proceed.

Looking Ahead

In the upcoming year it is expected that the OCYA will finalize a new investigations policy which is currently under development. Attention will also be placed on establishing a more timely process for receiving information from applicable Alberta government ministries, in order to facilitate more timely Investigative Reviews.

7. There is a difference between the OCYA Annual Report and Alberta Human Services' Annual Report in respect of the number of young people who died in care. This discrepancy is due to differences in reporting dates between the two organizations. OCYA statistics are based on the date that a report is received by the OCYA, rather than the actual date of the serious injury or death of the young person.

Strategic Support

"It is very life-affirming to work together with caseworkers, foster carers, biological parents, elders, doctors, lawyers, youth workers, family support workers and the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate to promote the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual wellness of the child entrusted to them. The interchange among individuals is challenging and creative and dynamic as we search for the best possible ways to support the child."

Theresa Zip,
Registered Art Therapist

The Strategic Support division oversees the business operations of the OCYA. Strategic Support is responsible for:

- leading the OCYA's financial and business planning, including preparation of the budget, forecasts, the business plan, financial reporting and monitoring;
- providing administrative services, including administrative support for the organization, along with accommodations and records management;
- supporting information technology; and
- managing human resources.

Key Activities in 2012-2013

Enhancing capacity to meet our new mandate.

In 2012-2013, the OCYA grew by 20 positions, a 54 per cent increase from the previous year. The additional staff was hired to support the OCYA's expanded mandate. With this, the OCYA's accommodation needs in Calgary and Edmonton increased, and a satellite office in Edmonton was temporarily established. During the past year, the OCYA worked with Alberta Infrastructure to identify a long-term solution to address these needs.

Addressing information system needs.

With a change in mandate came the need for changes to the OCYA's information management systems. Several actions were taken on this front:

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was negotiated with the Ministry to continue to provide information technology support to the OCYA in the 2012-2013 fiscal year.
- To facilitate the delivery of Advocacy Services, the OCYA implemented a new interface enabling it to import data from the Ministry's Intervention Services Information System (ISIS).

- In the fall of 2012, the OCYA, the Alberta Ombudsman and the Office of the Ethics Commissioner examined the viability of sharing information technology infrastructure, related resources and support in order to enhance IT capacity and reduce costs. The three Legislative Offices agreed to move forward on this initiative, and a new shared data centre is expected to be established in 2013-2014.

Establishing a new relationship with government.

As part of the shift in becoming an independent office, it was necessary for the OCYA to establish a new kind of relationship with the Government of Alberta. To this end, the OCYA developed an MOU with the Ministry which:

- sets out guiding relationship principles;
- commits the organizations to respect each other's roles and responsibilities;
- identifies the expected characteristics of the organizations' working relationship;
- commits to continuous improvement through evidence-based research and leading practices;
- provides for transparency in relation to sharing of information between the two organizations;
- discusses accountability and reporting to Albertans and to the Alberta Legislative Assembly; and
- addresses how the two organizations will work collaboratively to ensure the rights, interests and viewpoints of children and youth receiving designated services are considered in matters that affect them.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER
Education is what matters.
A chance for us to acknowledge
Our right to an educated, respecting our human dignity.

Artwork by Melissa H, age 18

Looking Ahead

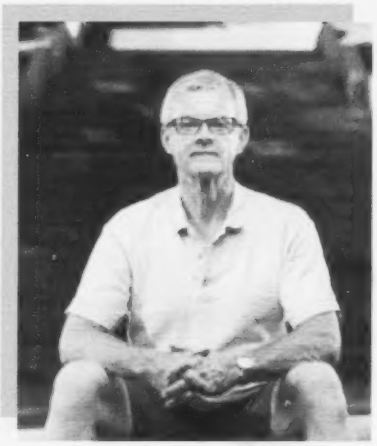
As the OCYA heads into its second year as a Legislative Office, the work of Strategic Support will be to focus on capacity-related issues. In November 2012, the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices approved the OCYA's 2013-2014 Operational and Capital Budget of $12.2 million. This represents an increase of 10.7 per cent from the previous year. The increase will provide for capacity enhancements across the organization, including: the attraction and retention of staff; increases in contracted expert advice for investigations; funding for youth engagement initiatives; and support for information technology needs.

Staff Reflections

"I grew up in a time when children were "seen and not heard". Fortunately my mother did not share that view and taught us to speak up for ourselves. In essence, we were our own advocates long before I heard of the Child and Youth Advocate. I also absorbed my mom's strong social conscience which is why I'm certain working for the OCYA is a good fit. I too have a thing about caring for others and, believe everyone is entitled to be heard and feel valued. To me, advocacy is a way of doing both.

The most important job I've ever done is raising my children. The work I do at the OCYA is an extension of that role; it's a great feeling to help someone's day run better. As a systems administrator I support the entire range of advocacy services offered by our office, ensuring our staff have access to the systems they need to carry out their duties. Defending the voices of the most vulnerable young people in Alberta shows them they matter, which fits perfectly with my view of the world."

Anita Lindstrom, Systems Administrator



"Advocacy is distinguished from other roles by its focus on ensuring the voice of the young person is heard. Advocacy is important to me because I want young people to know they are not alone, that I am on their team. I want youth to know their rights because when they do, they are more empowered to speak for themselves.

Without advocacy I fear that youth would feel further marginalized if there wasn't an advocate to stand with them to fight for what they felt they deserved.

A young person who had resided in care for much of their life once told me the most terrifying moment of their life was the moment after she came into care; she had the feeling of being totally alone. No youth should feel alone, ever. Hearing youth talk about their feelings in a meeting with adults and watching them enjoy the respect given to them by adults after sharing their feelings and viewpoints affirms for me the importance of the work I do."

Jim Beaton, Advocate, Southern Alberta

"My roots in advocacy go back many years to seeing a child impacted by a developmental delay surpass the accomplishments that were expected of him by removing the limits set by defined 'expectations.' He was raised without preconceived ideas of what he would or would not do in life and his siblings were taught to simply see him as little brother. Now an adult, he surpassed what is expected of those born with cerebral palsy and was sought after in adulthood for participation in research. My earliest teachers in advocacy were my younger brother and my parents. I was raised with the belief that people can defy the odds, which has been a defining characteristic of my work. I have been afforded the extraordinary privilege of seeing what unlimited expectation can do for young people. Seeing incredible feats of rehabilitation and growth, sparked by hope and someone willing to fan the flame is inspiring. All children and youth deserve to feel unwavering support. This is why I pursued a career in advocacy and it feeds my passion for this work. There have been many lessons in my first year at the OCYA. None so strong though, as viewing the unmistakable effects of bringing forward the perspectives of young people's interests and views grounded in the rights that our society has deemed valuable. It's been humbling and rewarding to see children and youth blossom over the course of our advocacy partnerships and become their own impassioned advocates. It's an incredible moment to be a part of; its importance immeasurable. I feel honored to be doing this work and consider myself among the fortunate who look forward to going to work every day."

Lee Bowers, Advocate, Northern Alberta

"A number of years ago, I met a person who had grown up in foster care in a different province. He was excited to hear about the Alberta Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, specifically the Legal Representation for Children and Youth (LRCY) program. He said to me that as a child, "Once, just once, I would have liked someone to ask me what I wanted and where I wanted to live."

When every other party in court has a lawyer, it is rewarding to know that all young people, even those unable to communicate for themselves, will not be overlooked because they have a lawyer there looking after their interests.

I am proud to work for an organization that promotes better outcomes for children and youth, and fosters a culture where young people are seen, heard, and never forgotten. My title within the LRCY program is Quality Assurance Manager, my job isn't about numbers and papers, it is about people, specifically young people. This is why I'm here and this is why I love my job."

Kirsten Wiebe, Quality Assurance Manager

Systemic Advocacy & Outreach

The Systemic Advocacy and Outreach division was established to respond to the OCYA's expanded mandate. Areas of responsibility for this division include:

- Public Education;
- Aboriginal Engagement;
- Community and Youth Engagement;
- Communications; and
- Systemic Advocacy.

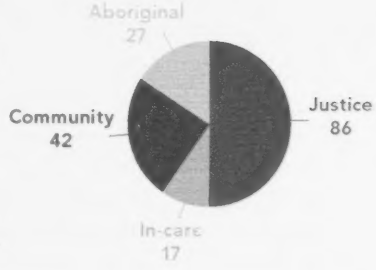
Key Activities in 2012-2013

Raising awareness about the OCYA's role with children and youth.

This past year saw significant growth and development in the OCYA's public education efforts. Much of these efforts were focused on raising awareness of the rights, interests and viewpoints of vulnerable young people in Alberta. Public education and awareness activities in 2012-2013 directly reached over 2,400 young people and adults under the OCYA's legislated mandate. Major activities included the following:

- 172 formal presentations were undertaken at which the OCYA shared information, expertise and knowledge with youth, caseworkers, foster parents and many other child and youth serving groups.
- Nearly half of these presentations were provided to young people, and informed them about their rights in the child intervention and youth criminal justice systems, and about the advocacy supports available through the OCYA.

Stakeholder Presentations: 172



- Approximately 75 per cent of the presentations were aimed at informing stakeholders in the child intervention and youth criminal justice systems about the OCYA's new role and expanded advocacy mandate.
- The OCYA responded to 42 requests from various communities to facilitate presentations and workshops aimed at enhancing natural and professional advocacy.
- Community engagement activities were undertaken throughout the year as a means of building relationships and fostering additional educational opportunities that affirm young people's rights in Alberta.

Engaging audiences on Aboriginal issues.

Recognizing the significant number of Aboriginal children and youth served by the OCYA, special efforts were made to engage and build relationships with Aboriginal audiences. During the past year, the OCYA's Aboriginal Engagement Consultants met with DFNAs, Aboriginal organizations and Aboriginal communities across Alberta. They also engaged a number of CFSAs on Aboriginal issues. These engagement opportunities included presentations about the OCYA, advocacy workshops, and Aboriginal awareness training for non-Aboriginal groups and others. A speaker series has also been developed which provides the OCYA with opportunities to hear and learn from Aboriginal organizations and leaders, as part of overall efforts to build knowledge among OCYA staff about current Aboriginal issues.

Artwork by Danessa M, age 9

Artwork by Vivian L, age 15

Celebrating National Child Day.

National Child Day is celebrated annually on November 20th and marks two historic events: the 1959 signing by Canada of the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Rights of the Child; and the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) sets out these rights in 54 articles, and includes children's rights to protection, provision and participation.

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate supports the celebration of National Child Day (NCD) in an effort to increase awareness of children's rights in Alberta. On November 20, 2012 the OCYA celebrated National Child Day at MacEwan University. Adding to the remarks made by the Child and Youth Advocate, a flash mob and a live performance of "We Want to Be Heard," a song written by Maigan van der Giessen, drew attention to the rights of children and youth. Participating in the flash mob were students from Elizabeth Finch School in Edmonton, Alberta.

In addition, an art contest, "We Want to Be Heard," was also announced on National Child Day. The purpose of the art contest was to create awareness about National Child Day and to encourage children, youth and their caregivers to learn about basic human rights, to which all

children are entitled. This contest had an overwhelming response with over 350 submissions received from children and youth across Alberta. The top three entries in the identified age categories (ages 5-11, ages 12-15 and ages 16-21) were selected to receive a prize. All of the participants' artwork will be displayed on the OCYA website to highlight their insights regarding their rights.

Reaching out to youth in new ways.

In early 2012, the OCYA moved into the world of social media by launching a Twitter account, @AlbertaCYA. Youth are high users of social media. The Twitter account will provide the OCYA with an additional means of reaching out to and connecting with youth. The OCYA will continue to embrace technology and new and evolving media to enhance its work on behalf of and with children and youth.

Work also began this past year on improving OCYA's brand and website. This will better reflect the OCYA's new mandate and identity, and help foster better connections with children, youth and other stakeholders. Youth will be consulted as part of this work, to ensure the OCYA's public-facing communications resonate with this audience.

> "Youth who have an effective model for advocacy learn to be appropriate, fearless, persistent, inquisitive, and assertive."
>
> **Amanda White,**
> **Hope Mission Youth Shelter and SHIFT Program**

Bringing public attention to children and youth issues.

Since the inception of the Children's Advocate Office in 1989, young people transitioning out of care have been telling the OCYA about their difficulties in having their needs met under the *Enhancement Act* and requesting the assistance of advocates. The difficulties young people identified were also echoed by many professionals.

To bring greater attention to the issue of youth transitioning out of care, the OCYA produced a Special Report: Where Do We Go From Here? The report was publicly released and tabled through the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in April 2013. The OCYA hosted a series of focus groups with youth and professionals in fall 2012 to hear directly from them about their experiences of transitioning out of care. These focus groups were attended by more than 140 young people who had been in care, were currently in care, or were leaving government care. The information gathered from these groups informed this Special Report.

Looking Ahead

Building on a year of substantial public education and engagement, the OCYA will undertake further work to promote the rights, interests and well-being of children and youth. Activities in the year ahead will include the following:

- Strengthening relationships with Aboriginal communities, organizations, leaders and Elders to ensure that the OCYA's advocacy work with Aboriginal young people reflects the context of Aboriginal peoples;
- Undertaking additional presentations and engagement to further develop the OCYA's relationships with key stakeholders and diverse communities;
- Educating OCYA staff on cultural diversity to ensure the organization's work considers and meets the unique needs of diverse cultural groups, especially Aboriginal children and youth; and
- Engaging members of the public and stakeholders to build advocacy capacity in communities across Alberta.

Systemic Issues

"Youth benefit from working closely with police in a bona fide relationship."

Val Hoglund,
Youth Unit,
Edmonton Police

Under the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, the OCYA is mandated to provide "information and advice to the Government with respect to any matter relating to the rights, interests and well-being of children." Such matters often take the form of systemic issues that are identified by the OCYA in the course of its work.

A systemic issue meets each of the following three criteria:

1. It affects more than an individual young person.
2. If not resolved, the issue is likely to re-occur.
3. Intervention is focused on changing policy, regulation or legislation.

The OCYA works to address systemic issues through a number of approaches including advocacy, public education and engagement, and the issuance of Special Reports. For accountability, the OCYA also identifies and discusses systemic issues in its Annual Report each year.

Artwork by Jaynna G, age 9

Issues Identified in 2012-2013

During the past year, the OCYA has identified two systemic issues:

- Young Children in Staffed Facilities; and
- Mental Health and Vulnerable Children and Youth.

Young Children in Staffed Facilities

As a society, we expect that children will be raised by their families. When children are unable to live with their families, there is an expectation that they will live in another family setting, such as with extended family, friends or foster care. For young children in particular, being raised in a family setting with at least one caring and consistent adult gives them the best opportunity to form positive and stable relationships throughout their lives.

The OCYA is witnessing an ongoing pattern of Alberta's young children being cared for in staffed facilities. In March 2013, the Ministry advised that there were 235 children across Alberta, all 10 years of age and younger, living in staffed facilities. This number has remained largely unchanged over the past 5 years. When making inquiries on behalf of some of the individual children in these facilities, the OCYA has been advised that there are a number of reasons these children were placed in a staffed facility. These reasons included a shortage of age appropriate placements, a desire to place siblings together, and a necessary measure to address the complex needs of some children.

The design and operation of staffed facilities, such as group homes has inherent barriers that impede a child's formation of relationships and attachments. Children in staffed facilities experience multiple caregivers due to staff turnover, shift changes, staff vacation and illness. The number of caregivers a child might interact with also increases with the number of children placed in a staffed facility. All of these factors can disrupt the ability of children to form connections with caregivers.

Research on younger children living in staffed facilities has confirmed these challenges. One study finds that "the type of out-of-home placement most likely to interfere with the development of healthy attachment in infants and toddlers is placement in a group care setting," and that it is this type of placement that is the most disruptive to the mental and emotional health of young people.[8] Other research has found that placement in a residential facility impairs a child's normative patterns of physical and psychological health, as well as their physical, behavioral, educational, social and emotional development.[9]

The development and formation of healthy and positive attachments is vital for all children, as these are the building blocks they will use to establish positive relationships throughout their lives. For young children in staffed facilities, not only is the formation of these attachments weakened, they are also likely to experience ongoing placement instability, increased behavioural and emotional difficulties, and have a greater likelihood that they will remain in care for a longer period of time.[10] In addition, many young children who are no longer able to live with their families have already experienced attachment problems prior to coming into care.

Artwork by Luke P, age 6

8 The Effects of Foster Care Placement on Young Children's Mental Health. 2000. Beth Troutman, Ph.D., Susan Ryan, M.A., and Michelle Cardi, M.A. University of Iowa Hospitals and clinics

9 Little, M., Kohm, A. and Thompson, R. The Impact of Residential Placement on Child Development: Research and Policy Implications. International Journal of Social Welfare Volume 14, Issue 3, Article first published online: 8 JUN 2005.

10 Berrick, J., Barth, R., Needell, B., & Jonson-Ried, M. (1997). Group care and young children. Social Service Review, June. 257-273.

Artwork by Sydney J, age 10

When children are unable to live with their families, they have a right to be cared for in a family setting whenever possible.[11] The United Nations offers guidance to state parties on how to implement child rights in early childhood[12] and when children are placed outside of their families in alternative care.[13] This guidance states that placement in a family setting is more likely to produce positive outcomes for children and encourages state parties to invest in and support family based placements, which can ensure "security, continuity of care and affection" and offer the opportunity for young children to form long term attachments.[14] This guidance also asserts that the placement in a staffed facility should be limited to "cases where such a setting is specifically appropriate, necessary and constructive for the individual child concerned and in his/her best interests."[15]

The *Enhancement Act* identifies the factors that must be considered when placing a child outside of their family. These factors are consistent with both the rights of the child and with the research relating to the placement of young children. Some of these factors include:

- "the benefits to the child of stability and continuity of care and relationships,"
- "the mental, emotional, and physical needs of the child and the child's mental, emotional and physical stage of development," and
- "whether the proposed placement is suitable for the child."[16]

While these factors are consistent with research and the rights of the child, not all of the reasons for young children entering staffed facilities in Alberta seem to consider these factors. In particular, the lack of age appropriate placements for young children as reason for some young children entering staffed facilities does not seem to be a decision that is based on the children's mental and emotional needs or their need for stability and continuity of care.

Young children who enter care must be given opportunities to build and repair attachments to consistent, caring adults. They need opportunities to learn to regulate and express their emotions, form close relationships to consistent caregivers and explore their environment. This development is difficult in a staffed setting.

11. UN General Assembly, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p.6.

12. UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), CRC General Comment No. 7 (2005): Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood, September 2005.

13. UN General Assembly, Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 24 February 2010.

14. UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), CRC General Comment No. 7 (2005): Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood, 36(b) p. 16-17, September 2005.

15. UN General Assembly, Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 21(b), p. 5, February 2010.

16. *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, RSA 2000, s. 2(i)(iv-vi)

It is time to move away from placing young children in staffed facilities. Children have a right to grow up in family environments and greater attempts need to be made to make this happen for children who are receiving designated services.

Accordingly, the Advocate recommends that the Ministry of Human Services:

1. *Increase the percentage of younger children who are in appropriate family-based placements. Unless there is a significant decrease in the number of younger children in care, increase the number of appropriate family-based placements.*
2. *Establish plans for all children aged 10 and younger who are in staffed facilities, that include goals and milestones directly related to their transition to a family based placement and track the number and length of their placements.*
3. *Reduce the length of time that children aged 10 and younger are placed in staffed facilities for all children for whom there is no child specific need for this type of placement.*

Artwork by Wahnita W, age 11

Artwork by Habba M, age 16

Mental Health and Vulnerable Children and Youth

Children and youth involved with the child intervention system often have elevated mental health needs. The National Commission of Family Foster Care indicates that children coming into foster care not only have special needs but in many cases "extraordinary" health, mental health, behavioural, and developmental needs.[17]

The relationship between mental health services and child intervention for young people has been studied and reported on for many years. Children involved with the child intervention system have often experienced maltreatment, such as abuse or neglect. This maltreatment can contribute to trauma, leading to attachment disorders, stress reactions, emotional dysregulation, and problems in behavioural regulation.[18]

Accordingly, services to address the effects of trauma need to be part of a mental health continuum to serve young people, particularly those who have been impacted by maltreatment. Better collaboration is also needed between the child intervention system and the delivery of mental health services to children and youth. These observations have been made in research as well as a number of reports and studies, including:

17. Pasztor, Eileen Mayers, David Swanson Hollinger, Moira Inkelas, and Neal Halfon. "Health and mental health services for children in foster care: the central role of foster parents." Child Welfare 85, no. 1 (2006): 33-57.

18. Milot, Tristan, Louise S. Éthier, Diane St-Laurent, and Marc A. Provost. "The role of trauma symptoms in the development of behavioral problems in maltreated preschoolers." Child abuse & neglect 34, no. 4 (2010): 225-234.

> They take care of me, visit me and see if I'm okay.
>
> Shanae M, age 9

- Creating Connections: Alberta's Addiction and Mental Health Strategy[19]
- Evergreen: A Child and Youth Mental Health Framework for Canada[20]
- Children's Mental Health Plan for Alberta: Three Year Action Plan (2008-2011)[21]
- Mental Health Status of Albertan Youth (2012)[22]

It is essential that children and youth who are in government care receive the mental health supports and services they require. Too often, these children and youth experience barriers in accessing services, such as the following:

- The complex needs of some children and youth result in significant challenges to providing appropriate services within the current mental health system;
- Some programs require caregiver involvement that staffed facilities often do not have the capacity to provide;
- The wait-lists for some mental health services are extensive; and
- There are a limited number of programs that serve youth with concurrent disorders, such as behavioural and/or addiction issues.[23]

Regardless of the underlying reasons for these barriers, the resulting challenge is the same: children and youth are coming into care and remaining in care with heightened mental health challenges, yet are not receiving the services they require.

In their work with young people, OCYA advocates continue to identify concerns about access to mental health services. Young people and service providers have identified these same concerns. Despite attempts to bring attention to this issue, it appears that access to mental health services for vulnerable young people in care continues to be a challenge. Compounding this challenge is a lack of reliable data on the issue, making it difficult to quantify the extent of the problem.

The potential consequences of failing to act on this issue are very serious. As observed by the Emergency Department Compass Report completed in Alberta, "When no formal mental health care is

19 Alberta Health Services. Creating Connections: Alberta's Addiction and Mental Health Strategy (2011). http://www.health.alberta.ca/newsroom/pub-mental-health.html

20 Kutcher, S. and McLuckie, A. for the Child and Youth Advisory Committee, Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2010). Evergreen: A child and youth mental health framework for Canada. Calgary, AB: Mental Health Commission of Canada. http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/1132

21 Alberta Health and Wellness. Children's Mental Health Plan for Alberta: Three Year Action Plan (2008-2011) (2008). http://www.health.alberta.ca/newsroom/pub-mental-health.html

22 Child and Youth Data Laboratory. Mental health status of Albertan youth. Edmonton: Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research (2012).

23 Ibid.

available, children and youth are vulnerable to deterioration in their conditions and the resulting acute illness can escalate to crises involving aggressive or risk taking behaviours, acute life threatening behaviour, and severe emotional distress."[24]

A related concern is suicide among young people in Alberta. Children and youth in care are at greater risk of suicide and attempting suicide than those who are not in care, primarily because of the impacts of child maltreatment they have experienced.[25]

The Ministry of Human Services is responsible to ensure that young people in its care receive the services they need to grow into healthy young adults with a sense of safety and well-being. The Ministry needs to take action, in cooperation with other Alberta government ministries, to ensure that young people in care who have mental health issues receive the specialized services they require to address those issues. This is consistent with several commitments in Alberta's new *Social Policy Framework*.[26]

Accordingly, the Advocate recommends that:

1. *The Ministry of Human Services engages with the Ministry of Health, and other critical stakeholders, to develop and implement an Action Plan to improve the provision of Mental Health Services to children who are receiving child intervention services. An Action Plan will require objectives, tasks, time frames, resources, and performance measures. One approach may be that the Ministry of Human Services asks the Council for Quality Assurance to implement an Expert Review Panel, in partnership with the Health Quality Council that results in an Action Plan for implementation.*
2. *The Ministry of Human Services review and revise its policy and practices regarding trauma for children and youth in care, and ensure that children and youth who are negatively impacted by traumatic events in their lives are provided with sufficient mental health supports and services to address their needs.*
3. *The Ministry of Human Services increase its capacity to recognize early indicators of mental health issues in children and youth who are in government care, and work with other Alberta government ministries to ensure that early intervention for mental health issues is available for these children and youth.*

Artwork by Sylvia H, age 9

24 Newton A.S., Rosychuk R.J., Ali S., Cawthorpe D., Curran J., Dong K., Slomp M., Urichuk L. The Emergency Department Compass: Children's Mental Health. Pediatric mental health emergencies in Alberta, Canada: Emergency department visits by children and youth aged 0 to 17 years, 2002-2008. Edmonton, AB; 2011.

25 Séguin M, Renaud J, Lesage A, Robert M, Turecki G. J. "Youth and young adult suicide: a study of life trajectory." Journal of Psychiatric Research 45(7) (2011):863-7026. Alberta Human Services. Social Policy Framework (2013).

26 Alberta Human Services. Social Policy Framework (2013).

Artwork by Jonathan S, age 15

Systemic Issues from Previous Annual Reports

Each year the OCYA monitors progress on systemic issues that have been identified in previous Annual Reports.

During the past year, the OCYA noted progress by the Ministry of Human Services in addressing two such issues: capacity-building through rights education; and use of historical information to inform decision-making. The Ministry has made changes in policy and practice on these matters such that the OCYA considers these systemic issues to be resolved. The OCYA will continue to work with young people who may be affected by these issues.

Other systemic issues previously identified by the OCYA are ongoing:

- Disproportionate Number of Aboriginal Children in Care;
- Mandatory Notification;
- Neglect; and
- Connection to Family and Community.

This section shares status updates from the Ministry on these matters, and offers comments on progress.

> "Children in care continue to be represented in greater numbers by the Aboriginal population. Opportunities should be made available for the creation of a good base of learning and awareness of their cultural values and teachings. To grow into healthy adulthood, they need to be proud of who they are."
>
> Gilman Cardinal, Elder, Bigstone Cree Nation

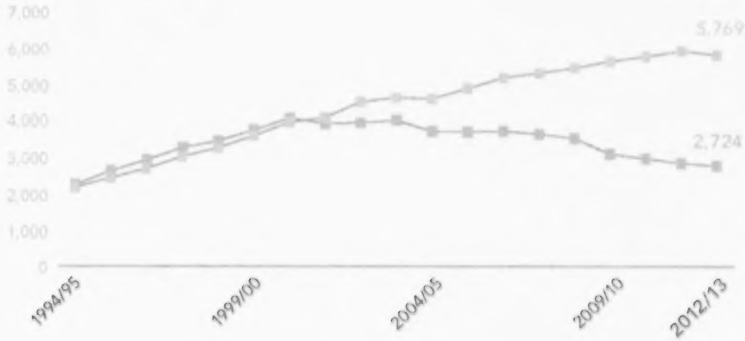
Disproportionate Number of Aboriginal Children in Care

The Advocate identified the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care as a systemic issue in the 2010-2011 Annual Report. Then in the 2011-2012 Annual Report, the Advocate's update identified that the disparity in the proportion of Aboriginal children in care compared to their non-Aboriginal peers had worsened during that time period. This Annual Report offers a further update to the original recommendation made in 2010-2011.

Advocate's Recommendation from 2010-2011

The Child and Youth Advocate recommends that the Ministry takes action, developed in partnership with Aboriginal stakeholders, that builds on work to date, and specifically addresses safely reducing the number of Aboriginal young people coming into Ministry care, and for those who do, reducing the amount of time in care and starts reversing the upward trend for Aboriginal young people in Ministry care. As well, for those Aboriginal young people who are in care, this action needs to include an increased commitment to their ongoing connection and involvement with their families, communities, and Nations and support for participation in their cultures and traditions.

Number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Children in Care



Proportion of Aboriginal Children in the General Child Population*

Not in Care (CP + FE)¥
Total: 3,540

Temporary Care
Total: 2,758

Permanent Care
Total: 5,734

General Child Population*
Total: 886,975

Ministry of Human Services Update

For the first time in many years, we have begun to see a decrease in the number of Aboriginal children in care (from 5,853 children in 2011-2012 to 5,769 children in 2012-2013). The Ministry, through the Child and Family Services and the Aboriginal Engagement and Strategy Divisions, continue to work on strategies to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in care, with a focus on collaboration and engagement and strengthening practice.

Collaboration and Engagement

The Ministry is working with Chiefs and Council in all Treaty Areas, Delegated First Nation Agencies (DFNAs) and Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSAs) to enhance and support the role of the Band Designate. The Band Designate plays a key role in the case planning of First Nation children and youth who receive child intervention services away from their First Nations community.

The Aboriginal Engagement and Strategy Division has met with and heard from more than 1,000 people to begin identifying the root issues that lead to Aboriginal children coming into care. The information gathered from the conversations will help identify strategies for enabling change.

We have a renewed partnership that involves Human Services, Aboriginal Relations and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, to improve communication and collaboration between agencies and community partners that will result in better outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities.

Focus on Outcomes and Practice

Recognizing inter-generational trauma as one of the root causes leading Aboriginal children and families to become involved with the child intervention system, the Ministry has begun to incorporate practice

* Based on Statistics Canada Census 2006 data and data from the Alberta Health and Wellness Interactive Health Data Application.

¥ Child Protection and Family Enhancement

tools such as Signs of Safety. This type of "trauma-informed practice" helps people to focus on relationships and working together in the best interest of a child.

Alberta is seeing significant growth in its urban Aboriginal population, a trend noted in the Child Intervention System Review completed in 2010, which highlighted the need for specific strategies to address the unique challenges facing Aboriginal children and families living in urban settings.

The first Aboriginal Outcomes-Based Service Delivery (OBSD) site was launched in Edmonton in April 2012. The OBSD Family Wellness Worker focuses on strength-based, inclusive practice that accepts where families are at in their lives. The worker and the family work together to identify challenges and the kinds of supports that will help the family heal. Although it is in its early days, this site has had success in serving more children in their own homes and communities than would have been typical in the past.

The second Aboriginal OBSD site will be launched in Calgary in summer 2013.

The Calgary and Area CFSA has also developed a Framework for Aboriginal Services to help guide practice over the next five to ten years. The Framework's vision is that:

- All Aboriginal children will be safe and secure and have a sense of belonging founded in family, community and culture.
- Families will be respected and supported.
- Families and communities will have a strong voice in the planning for children.

Other CFSAs/DFNAs are employing indigenous, trauma-informed and relationship based practice/strategies.

Progress Identified by the Advocate

While it is encouraging to see a modest reduction in the number of Aboriginal children in care, it is not known whether this reduction was directly the result of actions taken by the Ministry or a result of other factors. Although there have been a number of activities that have been undertaken by the Ministry, there is still no plan developed in partnership with Aboriginal stakeholders to address the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care, and while percentage of Aboriginal children in care has decreased by 1.4% it has decreased by 5.1% for non-Aboriginal children.

Mandatory Notification

In the 2010-2011 Annual Report, the Advocate identified a systemic issue regarding Mandatory Notification in that the Ministry did not have a process in place to track, analyze and learn from mandatory notifications to improve policy and practice. In the 2011-2012 Annual Report, the Advocate identified that limited progress had taken place, but there remained no Ministry-wide system in place to inform policy and practice. The update in this report is in relation to the recommendation from 2010-2011.

Artwork by Emma T, age 14

Advocate's Recommendation from 2010-2011

The Child and Youth Advocate recommends that the Ministry do the following:

- Set up a system by which mandatory notifications are tracked, monitored and aggregated internally;
- Analyze the information for themes and trends;
- Use the information to inform policy and practice; and
- Internally monitor the adherence to mandatory notifications policy and procedures province-wide to ensure the mandatory notifications protocol is consistent throughout DFNAs and CFSAs.

Artwork by Michelle F, age 14

Ministry of Human Services Update

The Ministry and OCYA staff have collaborated on the development of a new process for the submission of mandatory notifications to ensure the Ministry has current real time information for tracking purposes. This process will also enable the Ministry to support consistency in reporting through CFSAs and DFNAs. We are also collaborating on a review of the current mandatory criteria and categories to ensure they are clear and accurately reflect information that is meaningful to both the Ministry and the OCYA.

The Ministry is working with the OCYA to establish a process by which the trending, analysis and interpretation work is done collaboratively. At the same time, the Ministry's Child and Family Services Division is developing an operational policy framework to create predictable opportunities to strengthen and clarify policy and communicate with the field in a way that translates into practice improvements. This will allow us to use trending information as an input into an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement.

Progress Identified by the Advocate

Mandatory notification is an important process for children and youth receiving intervention services. Caseworkers are required to notify the OCYA when any of the following four situations arises for a child or young person:

- A young person disagrees with a significant decision that pertains to them;
- The needs of a child are not being met;
- Significant persons in the child's life have competing perspectives that are not focused on the child; and
- An allegation of abuse or neglect of a child in care is made.

The development of a system to enable tracking of mandatory notification has been referenced by the Ministry, and progress has been made. A clear workable plan needs to be developed and implemented. The OCYA looks forward to engaging in and supporting that process.

Neglect

In the 2011-2012 Annual Report, the Advocate identified that even though neglect was the single most prevalent concern coming to the Ministry's attention, the Ministry did not take action to address neglect in a specific way in the child intervention system.

Advocate's Recommendation from 2011-2012

The Advocate recommended the following:

The Ministry should engage stakeholders to identify issues, as well as opportunities to directly address neglect in a manner consistent with best practices in the field. The Ministry should develop and implement a plan to respond specifically to issues of neglect for children and families. The plan should:

Advocate's Recommendation (cont'd)

- Provide a clear working definition of neglect.
- Include an assessment / risk tool specific to neglect issues.
- Identify a range of interventions based on best practices to address neglect.
- Ensure resources are focused and available to address neglect for young people and their families.
- Include mandatory training initiatives to address neglect for caseworkers, supervisors and others responsible for delivering intervention services.

Ministry of Human Services Update

To ensure Ministry funding to community resources is aligned with evidence-based approaches to supporting vulnerable children and families, we are implementing an early intervention framework which is linked to the Government of Alberta's Early Childhood Development strategy.

We are also focusing on assessment and intervention strategies that address family support in the very early stages of involvement, for example:

- Many CFSAs and DFNAs have adopted strengths-based approaches to practice (i.e., 'Signs of Safety') which expand the assessment of risk to encompass strengths that can be built upon to stabilize and strengthen the child's and family's situation. These approaches work well to support families to address conditions related to neglect.
- Child intervention and contract agency staff in some areas have been trained in and adopted Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) level 5, which is an intensive, evidence-based parenting program that offers intensive support for parents at risk of child maltreatment. These types of programs are found to decrease the incidence of child abuse and neglect.

Human Services is leading the development of a five-year plan to eliminate child poverty and a 10-year plan to reduce overall poverty. The framework will be the overarching structure that directs action to eliminate child poverty and reduce overall poverty in Alberta. The poverty reduction strategy is identified as a priority initiative under the Social Policy Framework, and will be developed in alignment with the framework's principles and outcomes. A first draft of the poverty reduction strategy is targeted for completion in August 2013.

Artwork by Samantha L, age 11

Progress Identified by the Advocate

It is acknowledged that the Ministry is adopting new policies and programs. However, to date the OCYA does not have any concrete evidence that indicates the Ministry has developed or implemented a plan to respond significantly to issues of neglect.

Neglect and family violence continue to be the highest percentage of child protection concerns in Alberta and across Canada. Exposure to these types of maltreatment increases a young person's risk to experience other forms of abuse.[27] Addressing neglect requires a balanced focus on the family and the child to ensure risk factors are mitigated while ensuring young people are having their needs met.

Connection to Family and Community

In the 2011-2012 Annual Report, the Advocate identified the importance of continued family and community connections to young people involved with child intervention services as a systemic issue.

Advocate's Recommendation from 2011-2012

The Advocate recommended the following:

The Ministry should set a measurable standard and targeted compliance level to ensure key decisions are made with family and community relationships in mind – particularly when young people come into care or when their placement changes. The efforts put toward meeting this standard should be documented and audited. The standard should focus on:

- Maintaining relationships with family and community. Address relationship disruptions and challenges, and identify solutions to resolve or mitigate the related negative impacts.
- Mitigation strategies. When a young person is separated from a current relationship and connections, the Ministry should work to maintain these relationships in a meaningful way.

It is essential that caseworkers are supported to increase both initial and long-term activities to find family members and foster family and other supportive relationships that maintain meaningful connections for young people. This includes involving extended family, as soon as possible, in the decision-making process when bringing a young person into care, or when changing placement. These efforts should continue throughout a young person's involvement with the Ministry. This is especially important for young people to support them to develop and maintain cultural and traditional ties to their families and communities of origin. Maintaining these connections can be a source of strength for young people on a long-term basis.

27 Child Maltreatment in Canada, National Clearing House on Family Violence- Government of Canada

Ministry of Human Services Update

Increased efforts to work with DFNAs, First Nation Band Designates and Métis communities have resulted in more children being connected to their communities and extended family. Ministry investments in Band Designate functions and activities allows for First Nation communities to increase their capacity to participate in family searches and planning.

We are also reviewing practice during our initial involvement with families to emphasize the need to engage with them (including extended family members) in an intentional way before decisions are made. This aligns with our adoption of relationship-based practice tools (such as Signs of Safety) that better support families as central to planning and decision making so that connections are not lost even if a child must come into care.

As in the past, kinship care is the placement of choice. New "kinship search positions" assist in finding extended family or community members able to provide care to children who come into care. Although these positions are in the early stages of evaluation, there has been good success in locating family members who are able and willing to care for children.

We know we must develop relationships with other cultural communities as well. The Calgary and Area CFSA has fostered a strong, ongoing working relationship with the Muslim Council of Calgary (MCC).

The MCC assists the CFSA to:

- Identify Muslim community supports to assist keeping children out of care and Muslim members to care for kids through foster or kinship care.
- Educate and work with the Muslim community to take shared responsibility for children and youth in their community.

The Edmonton and Area CFSA is working with the Multi-Cultural Health Brokers and the Creating Hope Society to assist Aboriginal and immigrant mothers and grandmothers with understanding the Child Intervention and Legal systems in which they are involved. The project provides one-on-one support, connects families to supports and offers diversity training, leading to the building of capacity among other service providers who work with culturally diverse populations.

THE RIGHT TO HAVE
A standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs
A good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment
A RIGHT TO LIVE A FULL LIFE
WE WANT TO BE HEARD

Artwork by Andrew L, age 18

Progress Identified by the Advocate

Strengthening a search for kinship homes may produce better outcomes over time, and it is important to acknowledge the Ministry's activities to seek kinship homes. However it is not known by the OCYA how many more children are being connected to their communities and extended families, since this information was not provided. Standards have also not been identified, making it difficult to meaningfully measure progress.

Artwork by Chelsea H.R., age 15

Standing Issues

The OCYA monitors the status of two interwoven systemic issues on a standing basis: permanency and placement. These issues are of critical importance for the well-being of young people who are receiving intervention services.

Permanency and Placement

The goal of permanency planning is to provide young people who come into care with safe and stable environments. Research tells us that the sooner permanency is achieved for young people the better it is for them. The Ministry emphasizes permanency planning though requirements set out in the Enhancement Act Policy Manual.

A large number of young people in Alberta grow up "in care" and consequently lack permanency. A lack of permanency continues to be one of the most consistent issues observed by the OCYA. As has been noted in studies, a lack of deliberate permanency planning leaves children in a state of "limbo" having negative results.

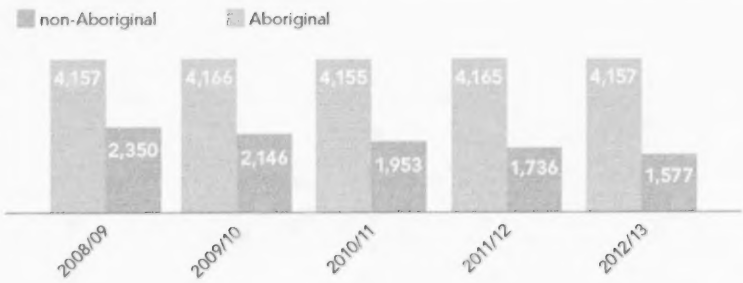
Research identifies that stable, healthy and lasting relationships greatly improve social, emotional and physical outcomes for young people. Permanency contributes to stability and continuity, cultural identity development and belonging, and supportive relationships and connectedness.[28] This is an area where improvements need to be made in Alberta, especially where it concerns children and youth of Aboriginal origin.

While there have been minor fluctuations, as noted in the following graph, the number of Aboriginal children in permanent care has remained constant over the past five years. Over the same period, the number of non-Aboriginal children in permanent care has decreased by 33 per cent. Whereas Aboriginal children comprised 64 per cent of children in permanent care in 2008-2009, last year they represented 72 per cent of all children in permanent care.

28 Federation of BC Youth in Care Network. "Belonging 4 Ever: Creating Permanency for Youth In and from Care." August 2010. New Westminister, BC.

Artwork by Kaylee F, age 9

Children and Youth in Permanent Care



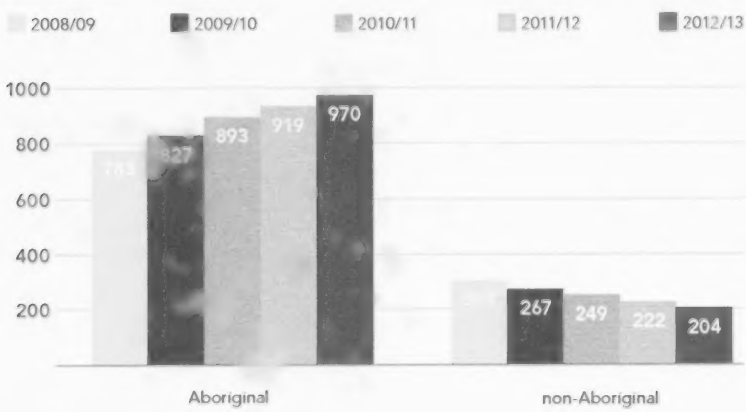
Children and Youth in Permanent Care

When these trends are examined by age group, Aboriginal children aged 4 to 7 years old who are in permanent care has increased by 24 per cent over the past five years (there have been small decreases in other age groups).[29] This highlights the need for a particular focus on how the Ministry is responding to the needs of this group of children. They need to achieve the same outcomes as are in evidence for non-Aboriginal children. Overall, more attention needs to be paid to decreasing the number of Aboriginal young people in permanent care.

The following graphs highlight the differences by age group between Aboriginal children and their non-Aboriginal peers in permanent care over time.

> Aboriginal children aged **4 to 7 years old** who are in permanent care has increased by **24 per cent** over the past five years.

Children and Youth in Permanent Care Aged 4-7 Years



29 The number of Aboriginal young people entering permanent care over the past five years has decreased among children aged 0-3 years (by nine per cent), children aged 8-11 years (by three per cent), children aged 12-15 years (by seven per cent) and youth aged 16-18 years (by two per cent).

Artwork by Sorcha R.D., age 16

Placement Type

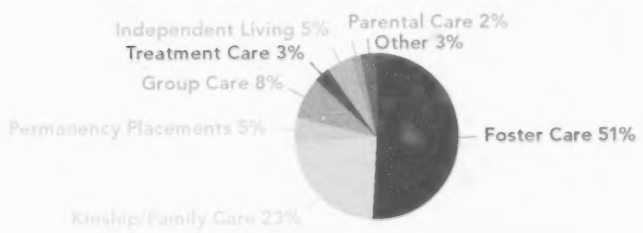
When a young person cannot live with their family, great care must be taken to determine a suitable placement for the young person. Many considerations contribute to a successful placement. The *Enhancement Act* and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) stress the importance of raising children within their home community, and maintaining children's physical and emotional connections. It is also critical to minimize the number of placement moves a child experiences. The *Enhancement Act* emphasizes the need to respect a young person's right to stable, nurturing relationships. The UNCRC contains a number of provisions that speak to the importance of a stable upbringing for young people.

When a child experiences regular placement moves, there can be serious consequences for that child including:

- An increased risk of attachment disorders and other behavioral challenges;
- The need to re-establish new relationships; and
- The possible disruption of the social networks that support the child.[30 31]

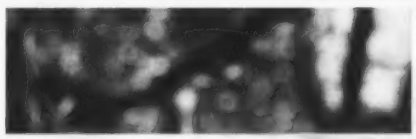
Just over half of all children in permanent care are in foster care. While the number of children in care has decreased somewhat, the percentage that are placed in foster care has remained unchanged for some time. As noted previously these are predominantly Aboriginal children and there has been a 24 per cent increase in Aboriginal children in permanent care between the ages of 4-7 since 2008-2009.

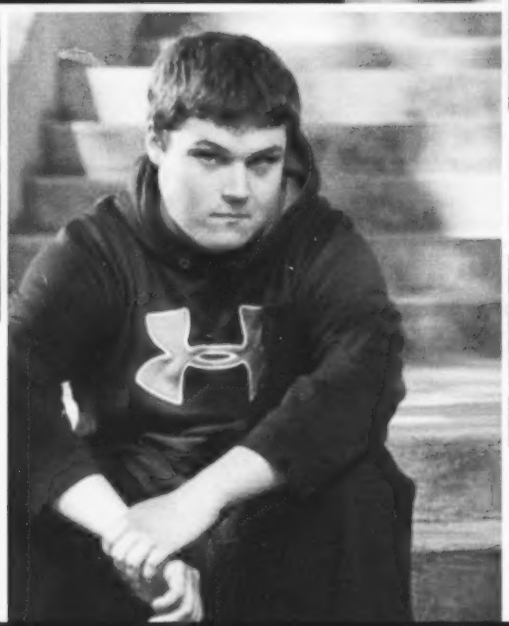
Placements of Children and Youth in Permanent Care in 2012-2013



30 Wilkes, J.R. Adoption and the Issue of Access or Contact in Permanency Planning in the Child Welfare System. Ottawa: Sparrow Lake Alliance: Children in Limbo Task Force (2002). pp. 90-92.

31 J. Strijker, Knorth EJ, Knot-Dickscheit J. "Placement history of foster children: a study of placement history and outcomes in long-term family foster care". Child Welfare: (2008);87(5):107-24.





Closing Remarks

> We assist in empowering their own voice by providing supports and building long term relationships and connections.

Theresa O'Hara,
Youth & Young Adult in Transition Youth Worker

The past year has been one of change and growth for the OCYA. Shifting to our new role as a Legislative Office and adapting to an expanded mandate has come with challenges. While providing vital services for children and youth, we have worked hard to adapt, enhance our capacity, and position ourselves to remain effective advocates for Alberta's young people.

I wish to thank the staff of the OCYA for their tireless efforts as we began to chart new territory with our office during the past year. Their input and perspectives have been valuable in determining our course forward, and I am certain their collective wisdom and commitment will strengthen the OCYA in the years ahead.

I also wish to thank the many stakeholders in the child intervention and youth criminal justice systems who engage with our office. As the OCYA has adapted to a new role and worked to renew relationships, these stakeholders have been patient, gracious and collaborative. We look forward to further fostering our working relationships.

It is important to acknowledge the efforts by the Ministry of Human Services to improve the services vulnerable young people receive. It is also important to be clear that I believe the Ministry can and should take more substantive action regarding recommendations made in my reports that will improve services and outcomes for vulnerable children. I remain hopeful and committed to seeing significant progress in this area as we move forward in our work.

As stated at the beginning of this report, advocacy is not a neutral activity. The staff of the OCYA works hard each day to meet the diverse needs of children and youth who require our assistance. It is the resilience, optimism and potential of these young people that inspires us each day. They are an important part of Alberta's present and its future. Together, through our work, we hope to make that future brighter.

Del Graff
Child and Youth Advocate

2012-2013 Financial Highlights

2012-13 Approved Budget to 2012-13 Actual Variance By Program (In Thousands)

	Approved Budget	Actual	Surplus (Deficit)
Child and Youth Advocate's Office	$ 355	$ 396	$ (41)
Child and Youth Advocacy	4,189	2,829	1,360
Legal Representation of Children and Youth	5,071	4,881	190
Public Education and Communication	498	298	200
Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations	377	655	(278)
Strategic Support	548	1,176	(628)
Capital Purchase		142	(142)
Total	**$11,038**	**$10,377**	**$ 661**

SUMMARY

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate managed its expenses within the 2012-13 approved budget of $11.0 million, ending the fiscal year with a surplus of $661,000.

In 2012-13, the OCYA's total expenses, including operating and capital expenses and provision for amortization and valuation adjustments, was approximately $10.4 million.

Salaries and benefits make up approximately 56 per cent of the OCYA's operating expense budget. The surplus of $661,000 is primarily attributed to savings in salaries and benefits as a result of delays in hiring new staff.

ANALYSIS BY PROGRAM

Child and Youth Advocate's Office

The Child and Youth Advocate's Office was over spent by $41,000 as a result of increased salaries and benefits and the provision of vacation liability.

Child and Youth Advocacy

Child and Youth Advocacy division expenses was under spent by $1.36 million, primarily due to savings in salaries, benefits and travel as a result of delays in hiring new staff, and contracted services. Savings from the Child and Youth Advocacy division (approximately $605,000) were used to offset increased contract and supply costs in the Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations division, and to cover salaries and benefits for staff who were transferred in-year from the Child and Youth Advocacy division to the Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations and Strategic Support divisions.

Legal Representation for Children and Youth (LRCY)

The Legal Representation for Children and Youth division recorded a surplus of $190,000. The LRCY division lapsed $314,000 to cover salaries and benefits of administrative and finance staff who were transferred in-year to the Strategic Support division. Additional expenses of $124,000 were incurred for an unbudgeted amortization of the Legal Appointment and Payment System and unbudgeted vacation liability.

Public Education and Communication

Public Education and Communication reported a surplus of approximately $200,000 primarily due to savings in salaries and benefits, which were offset by increased contracted services related to the development of the Annual Report and National Child's Day. The surplus was used to offset pressures in the Systemic Advocacy and Outreach division.

Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations

Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations was over spent by $278,000 mainly due to increased costs in salaries, benefits and vacation liability, offset by surplus in the Child and Youth Advocacy division. Increased costs were also incurred in contracts and supplies related to the preparation and production of the Youth Aging out of Care Special Report. This shortfall was offset by surplus in the Public Education and Communication division.

Strategic Support

The Strategic Support division was over spent by $628,000 due to salaries and benefits related to administrative support and finance staff that were transferred in-year to Strategic Support from other divisions in the organization

Capital

Information technology hardware was purchased, in collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman and the Office of the Ethics Commissioner, to establish a data centre to be used by the three Legislative Offices. Funding for this capital expense was covered from reported surpluses elsewhere in the organization.

Management's Responsibility for Financial Reporting

The accompanying financial statements of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, including the performance measures, are the responsibility of the Child and Youth Advocate.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the financial statements and performance results for the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate rests with the Child and Youth Advocate. I oversee the preparation of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate's annual report, including financial statements and performance results. The financial statements and the performance results, of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate maintains systems of financial management and internal controls which give consideration to costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and properly recorded so as to maintain accountability of public money;
- provide information to manage and report on performance;
- safeguard the assets and properties of the Province of Alberta under the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate administration; and
- facilitate preparation of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate's business plan and annual report.

In fulfilling my responsibilities for the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, I have relied, as necessary, on the management of the Office.

[Original signed by Del Graff]

Del Graff
Child and Youth Advocate
Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
July 3, 2013

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE

Financial Statements

March 31, 2013

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year ended March 31, 2013

Independent Auditor's Report

Statement of Operations

Statement of Financial Position

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Schedule 2 – Lapse/Encumbrance

Schedule 3 – Salary and Benefits Disclosures

Schedule 4 – Related Party Transactions

Schedule 5 – Allocated Costs

AUDITOR GENERAL *Alberta*

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly

Report on the Financial Statements

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2013, and the statements of operations and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate as at March 31, 2013, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

[Original signed by Merwan N. Saher, FCA]

Auditor General

July 3, 2013

Edmonton, Alberta

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS
Year Ended March 31, 2013

	2013	
	Budget	**Actual**
Revenues		
Other Revenue	$ -	$ -
Total Revenues	$ -	$ -
Expenses - Directly Incurred (Note 2b and Schedule 5)		
Program (Schedule 1)		
Child and Youth Advocate's Office	$ 355,000	$ 396,673
Child and Youth Advocacy	4,189,000	2,828,912
Legal Representation of Children and Youth	5,071,000	4,881,021
Public Education and Communication	498,000	298,398
Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations	377,000	654,730
Strategic Support	548,000	1,175,728
Total Expenses	$ 11,038,000	$ 10,235,462
Net Operating Results	$ (11,038,000)	$ (10,235,462)

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As at March 31, 2013

		2013
Assets		
Prepaid Expenses	$	6,091
Tangible Capital Assets (Note 4)		974,614
	$	980,705
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	$	1,968,504
Accrued Vacation Pay		584,434
	$	2,552,938
Net Assets/(Liabilities)		
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	$	-
Net Operating Results		(10,235,462)
Net Financing Provided from General Revenues		8,663,229
Net Liabilities at End of Year	$	(1,572,233)
	$	980,705

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
Year Ended March 31, 2013

	2013
Operating Transactions	
Net Operating Results	$ (10,235,462)
Non-Cash Items included in Net Operating Results:	
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets	101,376
Valuation Adjustments	148,754
	(9,985,332)
Increase in Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities (Note 3)	919,798
Increase in Prepaid Expenses	(6,091)
Cash Applied to Operating Transactions	(9,071,625)
Capital Transactions	
Cash Applied to Acquisition of Tangible Capital Assets	(141,783)
Transfer of Capital Asset from Human Services	(418,253)
Cash Applied to Capital Transactions	(560,036)
Financing Transactions	
Net Transfer from Ministry of Human Services (Note 3)	968,432
Net Financing Provided by General Revenues	8,663,229
	9,631,661
Increase in Cash	-
Cash, Beginning of Year	-
Cash, End of Year	$ -

The accompanying notes and schedules are part of these financial statements.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
March 31, 2013

NOTE 1 AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (the Office) operates under the authority of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* which was proclaimed on April 1, 2012. With the proclamation of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate was formed as a new Office of the Legislature. The net cost of the operations of the Office is borne by the General Revenue Fund of the Province of Alberta. Annual operating budgets are approved by the Standing Committee on Legislative Offices.

The Office represents the rights, interests and viewpoints of children and youth who receive designated services under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* and the *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act, and youth* involved with the youth criminal justice system.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards.

(a) Reporting Entity

The reporting entity is the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, which is a legislative office and for which the Child and Youth Advocate is accountable.

The Office operates within the General Revenue Fund (the Fund). The Fund is administered by the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance. All cash receipts of the Office are deposited into the Fund and all cash disbursements made by the Office are paid from the Fund. Net financing provided from (for) General Revenues is the difference between all cash receipts and all cash disbursements made.

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting

Expenses

Directly Incurred

Directly incurred expenses are those costs the Office has primary responsibility and accountability for, as reflected in the Office's of the Legislative Assembly budget documents.

In addition to program operating expenses such as salaries, supplies, etc., directly incurred expenses also include:

- amortization of tangible capital assets,
- pension costs, which are the cost of employer contributions for current service of employees during the year, and

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
March 31, 2013

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES (continued)

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting (continued)

Expenses (continued)

Directly Incurred (continued)

- valuation adjustments which include changes in the valuation allowances used to reflect financial assets at their net recoverable or other appropriate value. Valuation adjustments also represent the change in management's estimate of future payments arising from obligations relating to vacation pay.

Incurred by Others

Services contributed by other entities in support of the Office's operations are not recognized and are disclosed in Schedule 4 and allocated to programs in Schedule 5.

Assets

Financial assets are assets that could be used to discharge existing liabilities or finance future operations and are not for consumption in the normal course of operations. Financial assets of the Office are limited to financial claims, such as advances to and receivables from other organizations, employees and other individuals. Assets acquired by right are not included. Tangible capital assets of the department are recorded at historical cost and amortized on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the assets. The threshold for capitalizing new systems development is $250,000 and the threshold for major systems enhancements is $100,000. The threshold for all other tangible capital assets is $5,000.

Amortization is only charged if the tangible capital asset is in use.

Liabilities

Liabilities are recorded to the extent that they represent present obligations as a result of events and transactions occurring prior to the end of the fiscal year. The settlement of liabilities will result in sacrifice of economic benefits in the future.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
March 31, 2013

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND REPORTING PRACTICES (continued)

(b) Basis of Financial Reporting (continued)

Net Liabilities

Net Liabilities represents the difference between the carrying value of assets held by the Office and its liabilities.

Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards require a "net debt" presentation for the statement of financial position in the summary financial statements of governments. Net debt presentation reports the difference between financial assets and liabilities as "net debt" or "net financial assets" as an indicator of the future revenues required to pay for past transactions and events. The Office operates within the government reporting entity, and does not finance all its expenditures by independently raising revenues. Accordingly, these financial statements do not report a net debt indicator.

Valuation of Financial Assets and Liabilities
Fair value is the amount of consideration agreed upon in an arm's-length transaction between knowledgeable, willing parties who are under no compulsion to act.

The fair values of Accounts Receivable, and Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities are estimated to approximate their carrying values because of the short-term nature of these instruments.

NOTE 3 TRANSFER OF NET LIABILIITES

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate was formed on April 1, 2012 with the proclamation of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*. Effective April 1, 2012, the Ministry of Human Services transferred net liabilities to the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate as follows:

Capital Assets, net	$515,954
Accrued Liabilities	(1,048,706)
Accrued Vacation Pay	(435,680)
Net Liabilities	**($968,432)**

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
March 31, 2013

NOTE 4 TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSETS

	Office Equipment	Computer Hardware	Computer Software	2012-13 Total
Estimated Useful Life	3 years	3 years	5 years	
Transfers In [(a)]	$ 19,314	$ -	$1,435,402	$ 1,454,716
Additions	12,795	123,408	5,580	141,783
	$ 32,109	$ 123,408	$1,440,982	$ 1,596,498
Accumulated Amortization				
Transfers In [(a)]	$ 9,657	$ -	$ 510,852	$ 520,509
Amortization Expense	6,438	2,483	92,455	101,376
	$ 16,095	$ 2,483	$ 603,307	$ 621,885
Net Book value at March 31, 2013	$ 16,014	$ 120,925	$ 837,675	$ 974,614

Note [a]: Assets and Accumulated Amortization transferred from Ministry of Human Services

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
March 31, 2013

NOTE 5 CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Contractual obligations are obligations of the Office to others that will become liabilities in the future when the terms of the contract or agreement are met.

As at March 31, 2013, the Office has the following contractual obligations:

	2013
Obligations under Operating Leases, and Contracts	$ 190,298

Estimated payment requirements for the unexpired terms of these contractual obligations are as follows:

	Long-term Leases
2013 - 14	$ 189,251
2014 - 15	1,047
	$ 190,298

NOTE 6 BENEFIT PLANS

The Office participates in the multi-employer pension plans: Management Employees Pension Plan, Public Service Pension Plan and Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers. The expense for these pension plans is equivalent to the annual contributions of $710,560 for the year ended March 31, 2013. The Office is not responsible for future funding of the plan deficit other than through contribution increases.

At December 31, 2012, the Management Employees Pension Plan reported a deficiency of $303,423,000 (2011 – Deficiency $517,726,000), the Public Service Pension Plan reported a deficiency of $1,645,141,000 (2011 - deficiency $1,790,383,000), and the Supplementary Retirement Plan for Public Service Managers reported a deficiency of $51,870,000 (2011 – deficiency $53,489,000).

The Office also participates in two multi-employer Long Term Disability Income Continuance Plans. At March 31, 2013, the Bargaining Unit Plan reported an actuarial surplus of $51,717,000 (2012 – surplus $9,136,000) and the Management, Opted Out and Excluded Plan an actuarial surplus of $18,327,000 (2012 – surplus $10,454,000). The expense for these two plans is limited to the employer's annual contributions for the year.

NOTE 7 APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The financial statements were approved by the Child and Youth Advocate.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE **Schedule 1**
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Expenses - Directly Incurred Detailed by Object
Year Ended March 31, 2013

	2013	
	Budget	**Actual**
Voted:		
Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits	$ 6,213,000	$ 5,573,134
Supplies and Services	4,825,000	4,560,952
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets		101,376
Total Expenses	$ 11,038,000	$ 10,235,462

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Lapse/Encumbrance
Year Ended March 31, 2013

Schedule 2

	2013					
	Voted Estimate [1]	Adjustments	Supplementary Estimate	Adjusted Voted Estimate	Actual [2]	Unexpended (Over Expended)
Program - Operating Expenses						
Child and Youth Advocate's Office	$ 355,000			$ 355,000	$ 395,023	$ (40,023)
Child and Youth Advocacy	4,189,000			4,189,000	2,768,685	1,420,315
Legal Representation of Children and Youth	5,071,000			5,071,000	4,760,616	310,384
Public Education and Communication	498,000			498,000	306,049	191,951
Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations	377,000			377,000	587,175	(210,175)
Strategic Support	548,000			548,000	1,167,784	(619,784)
Total Program Operating Expenses	$ 11,038,000	$ -	$ -	$ 11,038,000	$ 9,985,332	$ 1,052,668
Program - Capital Investments						
Capital Investments				$ -	$ 141,783	$ (141,783)
Total Program Capital Investments	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 141,783	$ (141,783)

(1) As per Voted Expenses and Capital Investment by Program of 2012-13 Offices of the Legislative Assembly Estimates
(2) Actuals exclude non-voted amounts such as amortization and valuation adjustments

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
SALARY AND BENEFITS DISCLOSURE
Year Ended March 31, 2013

Schedule 3

	2013			
	Base Salary [a]	Other Cash Benefits [b]	Other Non-Cash Benefits [c]	Total
Senior Official				
Child and Youth Advocate [d]	$ 215,854	$ -	$ 62,012	$ 277,866
Executive Director				
Executive Director, Child and Youth Advocacy	133,017	-	35,320	168,337
Total	$ 348,871	$ -	$ 97,332	$ 446,203

Prepared in accordance with *Treasury Board Directive* 12/98 as amended.

(a) Base salary includes pensionable base pay.
(b) There were no bonuses paid in 2013.
(c) Other non-cash benefits include the Office's share of all employee benefits and contributions or payments made on behalf of employees including pension, supplementary retirement plans, health care, dental coverage, group life insurance, short and long term disability plans, professional memberships, training and health spending account.
(d) Automobile provided, no dollar amount included in other non-cash benefits.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE **Schedule 4**
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Related Party Transactions
Year Ended March 31, 2013

Related parties are those entities consolidated or accounted for on the modified equity basis in the Government of Alberta's financial statements. Related parties also include management personnel in the Office.

The Office and its employees paid or collected certain taxes and fees set by regulation for premiums, licences and other charges. These amounts were incurred in the normal course of business, reflect charges applicable to all users, and have been excluded from this schedule.

The Office had the following transactions with related parties recorded on the Statement of Operations and the Statement of Financial Position at the amount of consideration agreed upon between the related parties:

	Other Entities	
	2013	
Expenses - Directly Incurred		
Ministry of Service Alberta	$	774
Ministry of Infrastructure		120
Ministry of Executive Council		1,280
Total	$	2,174

The Office also had the following transactions with related parties for which no consideration was exchanged. The amounts for these related party transactions are estimated based on the costs incurred by the service provider to provide the service. These amounts are not recorded in the financial statements but are disclosed in Schedule 5.

	Other Entities	
	2013	
Expenses - Incurred by Others		
Accommodation	$	335,437
Information Technology		143,313
Total	$	478,750

OFFICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE **Schedule 5**
SCHEDULE TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
Allocated Costs
Year Ended March 31, 2013

	2013			
		Expenses - Incurred by Others		
Program	Expenses [a]	Accomodation Costs [b]	Information Technology [c]	Total Expenses
Child and Youth Advocate's Office	$ 396,673	$ 12,424		$ 409,097
Child and Youth Advocacy	2,828,912	136,659	48,642	3,014,213
Legal Representation of Children and Youth	4,881,021	62,118	94,214	5,037,353
Public Education and Communication	298,398	18,635		317,033
Systemic Advocacy and Stakeholder Relations	654,730	31,059	456	686,245
Strategic Support	1,175,728	74,542		1,250,270
	$ 10,235,462	$ 335,437	$ 143,313	$ 10,714,211

(a) Expenses - Directly incurred as per Statement of Operations.
(b) Costs shown for Accomodation include grants in lieu of taxes.
(c) Application Management Support (AMS) Costs incurred by Ministry of Human Services to maintain OCYA Applications.

Contact Us

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Legal Representation for Children & Youth

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Correction – Child and Youth Advocate 2012-2013 Annual Report

The following change was made to the electronic version of the 2012-2013 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate, when compared to the print version published in October 2013.

Page Number	Change
Page 18	*Revised the following paragraph to reflect the correct information of the percentage increase in legal appointments compared to 2011-2012:* **Addressing increased needs for legal representation.** During 2012-2013, a total of 2,101 young people were appointed legal counsel, 94 more children than in the previous fiscal year. A total of 1,264 legal appointments were made, an increase of 48 legal appointments, which represents a 3.9 per cent increase in appointments compared to 2011-2012.